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Volume 16, No. 3

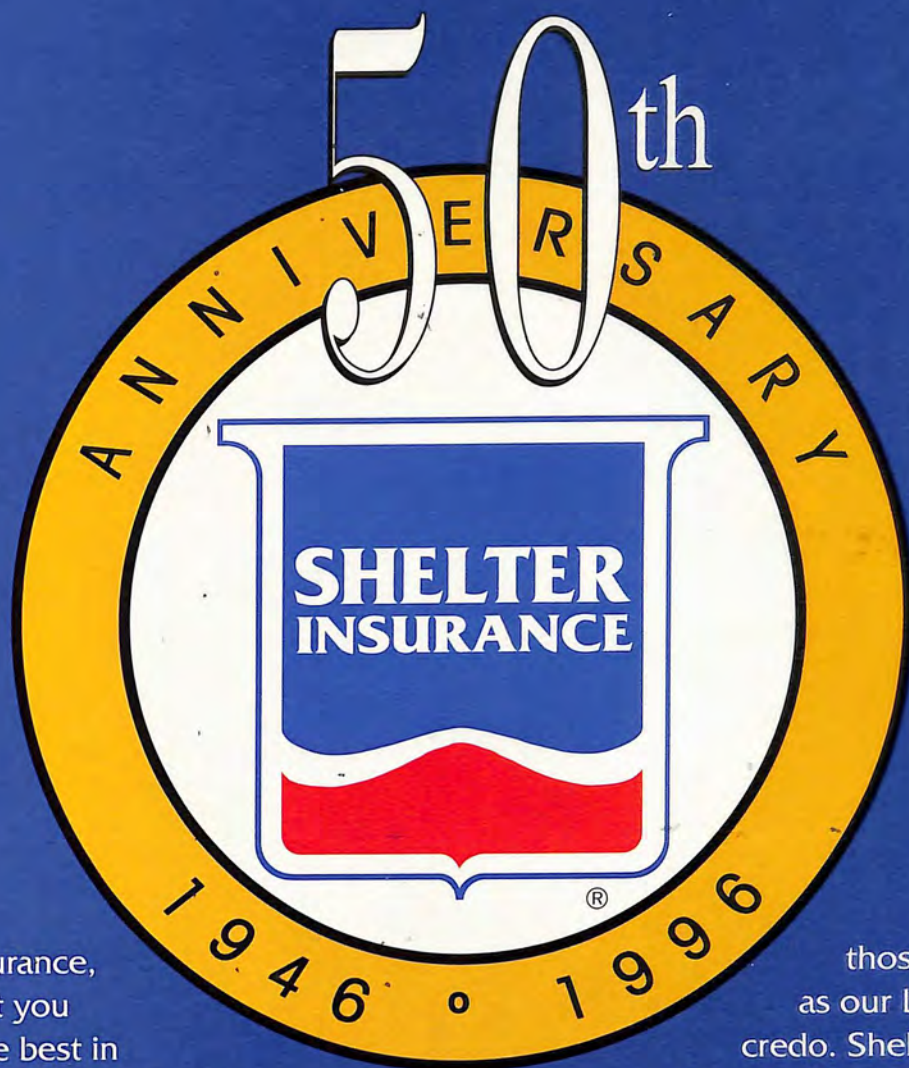
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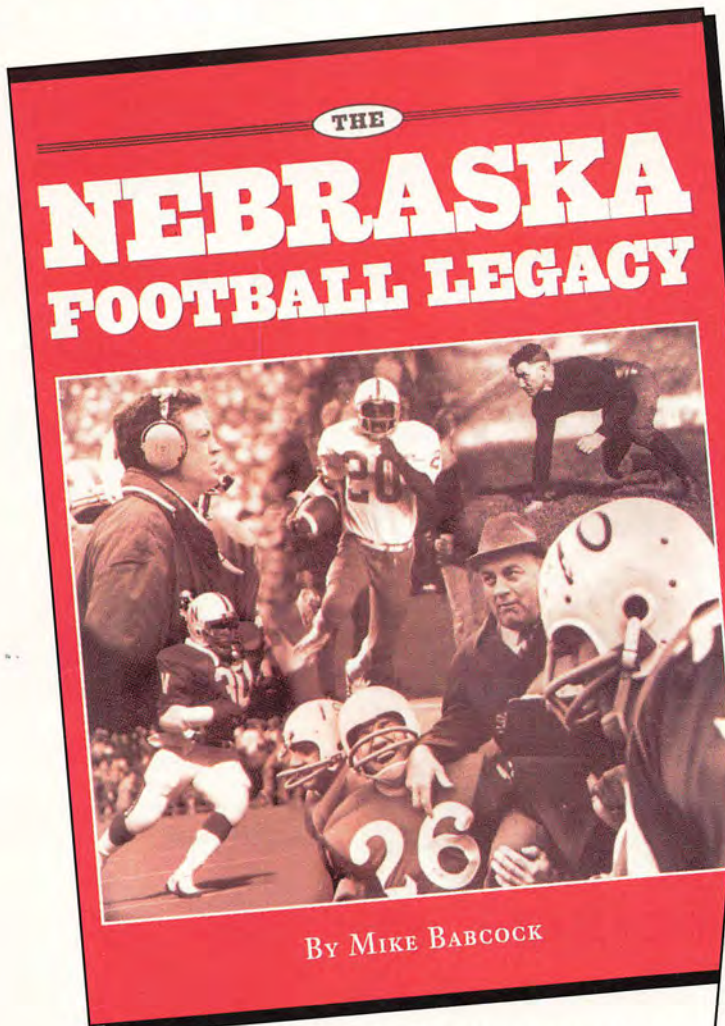
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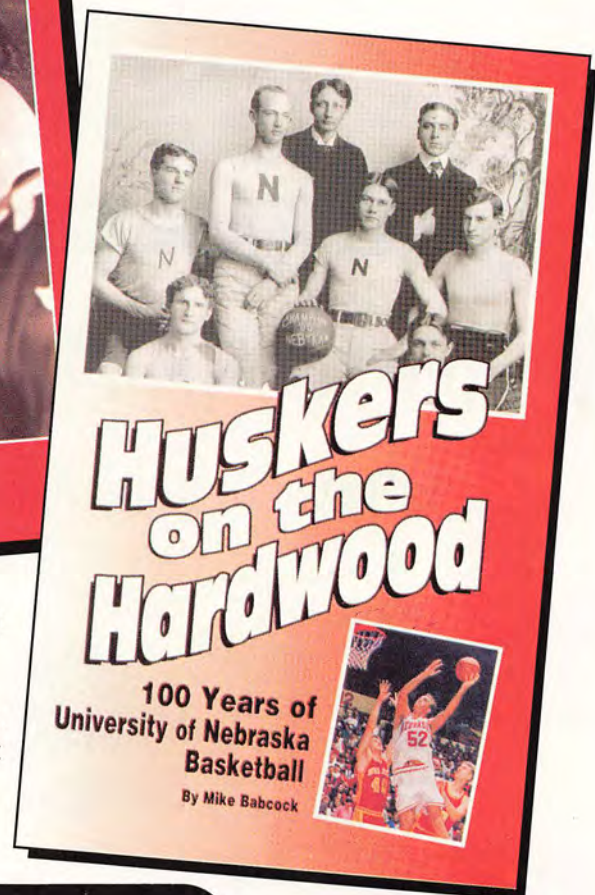
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## NEXT ISSUE

Will be mailed by March 13, 1996.

## ON THE COVER

DeAngelo Evans courtesy of Wichita (Collegiate) HS





Since when has our mascot and or logo become a football helmet? This only reinforces the nationally held stereotype (among some eastern influences) that all our school cares about is football. I don't understand some of our alumni's insecurity with Herbie Husker.

Among national alumni, it is a much more endearing symbol than an inanimate football helmet. Until the powers that be come up with something better to replace Herbie, let's stick with him.

Mark J. Bernasek, '81  
BERNASEM@dma.gov

This letter is in response to Doug Looney's prediction on the Fiesta Bowl (Jan. 1996).

Dr. Tom's boys deserve an apology for that complete understatement. How can you give only seven points to the No. 1 offensive team in the

nation, going up against Florida's undersized and overconfident defense. He stated that Florida had too much speed for Nebraska. What did they do, leave it in Florida?

Tommie Frazier and Lawrence Phillips walked all over Florida's so-called defense alone. The Big Red simply controlled the line of scrimmage on both sides of the ball.

Spencer Huggett  
Roslyn, S.D.

I have been an avid Husker fan since the "knothole days" in the late 1920s and early 30s. Never have I been more proud and impressed with the Nebraska football program.

Coach Tom Osborne should be considered a great man and wonderful coach. Either statement applies. He will go down in the annals of Nebraska football as one who has accomplished more toward development of athletes than any other coach. No coach better exemplifies what it means to understand and help athletes in their time of need. This help not only relates to improving their athletic skills, but to the development of character.

John Tunberg  
Destin, Fla.

In all the years that I have taken

*Huskers Illustrated*, I have never seen a better issue than you February 1996 edition. I went to the newsstands and bought four more copies for friends.

I also bought the *Sports Illustrated* edition, but yours blew it out of the water. The photos from the game were unique. Especially the opener with the guy screaming. What a classic shot. I was there in Tempe and that photo captured the emotion that I and many others felt that night.

Patrick Berry  
Omaha, Neb.

I can't wait to see what the recruiting gurus have to say about this year's recruiting class. I'm predicting they will rip the Huskers saying Tom Osborne again failed to sign top-flight talent. News flash, but this same thing is said every year and we've won two consecutive national titles. I think it's time for the gurus to get a day job.

Justin Kalibra  
St. Paul, Minn.

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# Fiesta Fallout

*National title aside, the dramatic and decisive victory in the Fiesta Bowl both helped and hurt this year's recruiting process*

It appears Nebraska's football recruiting class for 1996 will rank among the nation's best according to the self-proclaimed experts.

Tom Osborne feigned concern regarding that fact in announcing the Cornhuskers' 18 scholarship recruits during a news conference in the South Stadium varsity lounge on Feb. 7, the national letter-of-intent signing day.

"I'm a little bit nervous because we may be rated somewhere in the Top 10," Osborne said, somewhat facetiously. "I prefer to be (rated) 30, 35 or 40. Usually, you do better if you're rated lower."

In Nebraska's case, at least, that has been true in recent seasons. The Cornhuskers have won five straight conference titles and back-to-back national championships with recruiting classes that didn't receive the respect they obviously deserved.

Osborne and his staff do their own evaluations of potential recruits rather than relying on the limited perspective afforded by lists compiled by the aforementioned experts.

There is a certain amount of circular reasoning in such lists, which probably explains why Nebraska's class will be accorded a little more national respect than usual.

Player rankings depend on the reputations of the schools that recruit them rather than on objective criteria. For example, Notre Dame's recruiting classes perennially rank among the nation's best because of Notre Dame's high profile nationally. If Notre Dame is interested in a player, he must be outstanding. Therefore, all of Notre Dame's recruits are, by definition, outstanding. If they weren't then Notre Dame wouldn't recruit them.

Since Nebraska was a repeat national champion, some of the players the Cornhuskers recruited this year were probably rated higher

than they would have been otherwise.

Ironically, the second national title — or, at least, the Fiesta Bowl victory that clinched it — had a detrimental effect on recruiting in a couple of instances, according to Osborne. The 62-24 victory against Florida was so decisive that some recruits went elsewhere.

After the game, three or four recruits who had indicated they

Michael Chow



**Perceived to have nothing but supermen on his team, Osborne had recruits back off for fear of not getting playing time.**

would visit Nebraska called to say they had changed their minds. They weren't coming, they said, because they didn't think they could play at Nebraska.

"We couldn't change their minds," Osborne said. "They said: 'You're too good.' You'd think that would never happen. But it did."

The Cornhuskers had a solid recruiting relationship with what they considered the best high school player in Oklahoma, Osborne said. "Milt Tenopir said he had the wall of his bedroom papered with Nebraska stuff.

"So we thought, 'We've got a good shot at (getting) this guy.' But when we called there, he said: 'I just don't think I can play for you.'"

And there was nothing the Cornhuskers could do to change that.

Such recruits "thought: 'Well, you've just got a bunch of supermen out there.' So that was tough," Osborne said. "It (the Fiesta Bowl game) was just one of those nights. We were good. But we weren't that much better."

The lopsided bowl-game victory might have had more of an impact on recruiting than some much-publicized off-the-field problems, said Osborne. "The (effect of the negative) national publicity was a little nebulous. We couldn't put a handle on that, whether it was a plus or a minus."

It hurt some. Heavily recruited players who had to narrow long lists of schools might have crossed off Nebraska because of that. "But it didn't seem to be a huge factor," said Osborne. "And in some cases, it was a plus."

Osborne's handling of Lawrence Phillips, for example, indicated to some recruits that if they chose Nebraska, they could count on his support, that he and his assistants wouldn't "throw (a player) to the wolves if some circumstance comes up that isn't very favorable.

"We probably saw about as much of that as the other. It helped us with some. It hurt us with some. But at least people knew about us."

That Osborne was able to maintain a sense of humor about the matter was further evidence of the negligible effect it had on recruiting.

"We set out to recruit 18, and we got 18 signed," Osborne said. All but Ralph Brown, II, announced their intentions before the letter-of-intent signing day. The speculation on Nebraska's recruiting class being included among the nation's elite was pre-Brown. His inclusion only made it better.

That's good . . . or bad, depending on how you look at it. "I think they'll work out well," Osborne said. ■



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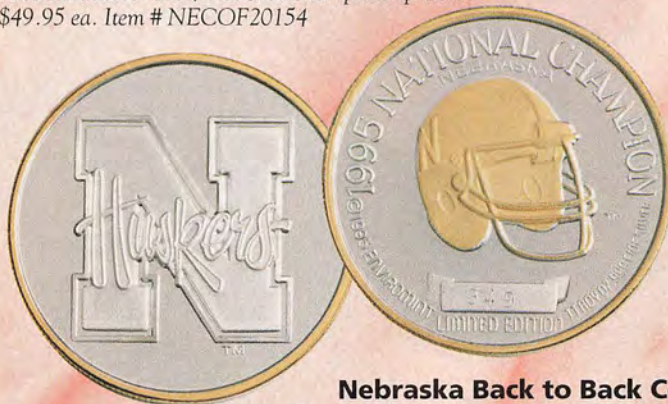
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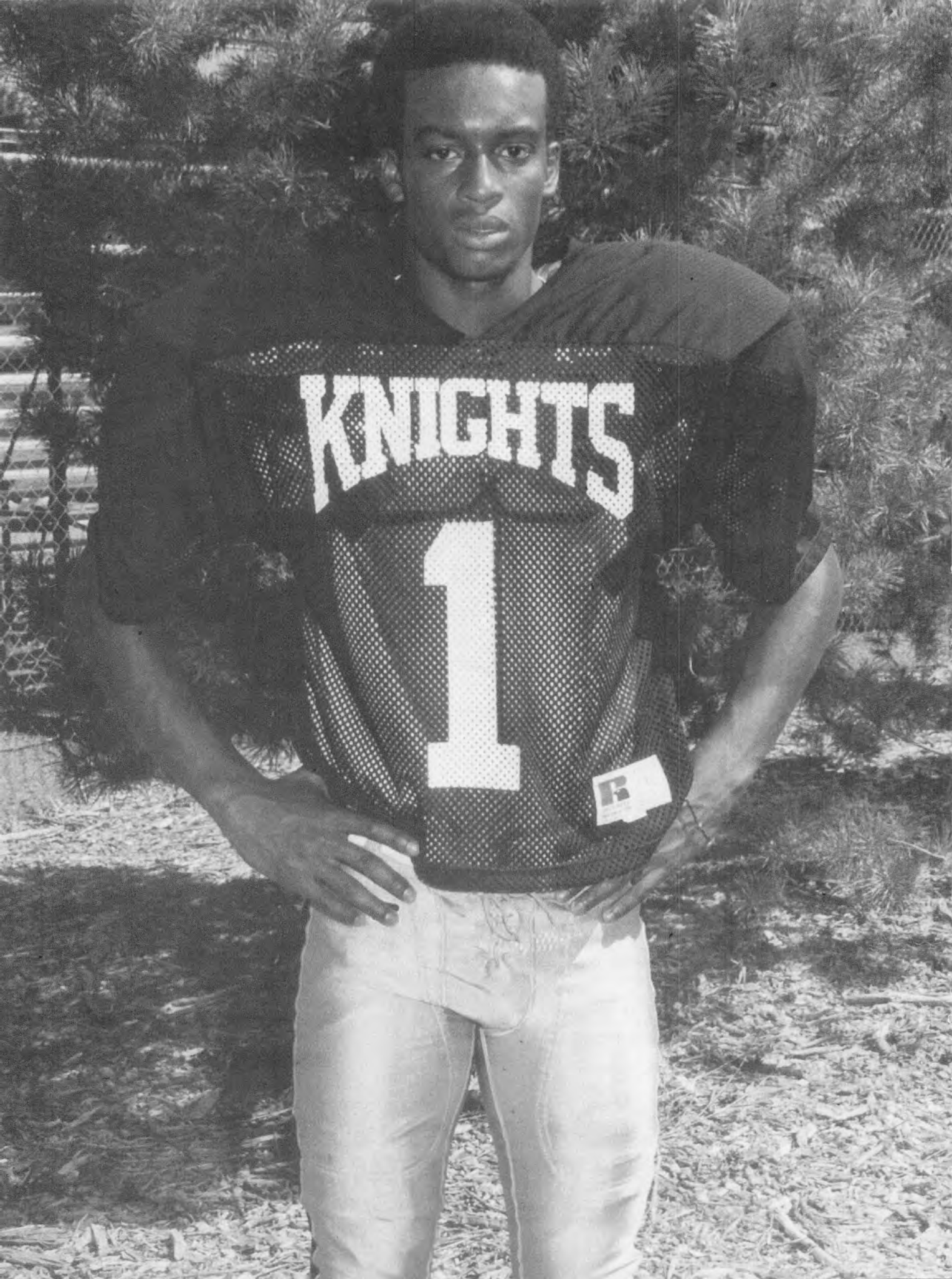
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# Cleaning Up

**Another Top 10 class for Nebraska as it continues to prove to be the nation's model for college football programs**

**By James Hale**

Nebraska went into the 1996 recruiting season in the best recruiting position in the country. The Huskers had put together back-to-back national gridiron championships and just missed on a third title with a missed field goal as time ran out against Florida State in 1994.

Despite the negative off the field publicity the Huskers endured during the 1996 season, they were hailed as the model program on how to build a college football dynasty.

Nebraska was one of the 'in' schools among prep football players. A school which players automatically put on their list because it looks so good.

The Huskers, looking for another balanced class, hoped to sign a quarterback who could have a major impact as a freshman. With Tommie Frazier and Brook Berringer gone, the Huskers will have perennial backup Matt Turman listed as the No. 1 quarterback going into spring ball. If healthy, Scott Frost, Jeff Perino and Frankie London should also be in the running.

Looking to reload on the offensive line, at fullback and at receiver was also a priority.

A year ago, the Huskers shocked the college football recruiting world, having the majority of their nationally ranked Top 10 recruiting class committed by the first weekend in January.

Nebraska coach Tom Osborne warned many times this year that 1995 was a very unusual recruiting year for Nebraska. It wasn't likely to be duplicated again.

However, the Huskers threw a recruiting scare on the college football world when they earned a commitment from All-American running back DeAngelo Evans of Wichita (Collegiate), Kan., in the middle of the summer.

Evans has been a household name in the prep football world since his sophomore year when he rushed for 3,060 yards and 49 touchdowns. Going into his senior year he was on pace to break every rushing record in prep football. However, an ankle injury forced him to miss six games and Evans had to settle for finishing as

the fourth best rusher of all time with 8,473 yards and the third best touchdown scorer with 131.

Despite the injuries, Evans put together a senior year most would be proud off with 986 yards and 19 touchdowns. However, the Huskers came painfully close to not getting a chance at Evans.

Evans took his first visit to Notre Dame and came back committed to the Fighting Irish. Fortunately for Husker fans, Evans' father wanted him to give the Huskers a look.

"I came back from Notre Dame all caught up in their great football tradition and was just blown away with the visit," Evans said. "However, my dad was smarter than that. He didn't necessarily care if I committed to Notre Dame, but he knew how great the Nebraska program was and how I always liked it and insisted that I visit them before making any decision.

"I am glad he did, because he turned out to be right. I loved my visit to Nebraska more than anything I could ever imagine."

Before the prep football season

had started, the Huskers earned a commitment from the top running back in the country. Despite the injuries, the Huskers never wavered on

their scholarship offer.

It wasn't long before the Huskers earned their next two commitments. In October, Nebraska earned two outstanding in-state commitments from offensive lineman Russ Hochstein of Hartington (Cedar Catholic) and fullback Willie Miller of Omaha (Bellevue West).

Hochstein, a life long Husker fan,



**Nebraska landed 17 prep All-Americans including receiver J.R. Edwards (left) defensive back Mike Brown (above) and offensive lineman Justin Ferrell (right).**





accepted without considering any other school. Miller emerged as one of the nation's best fullbacks and at season's end earned All-American honors after rushing for 1,603 yards and 19 touchdowns. He, too, always wanted to play for the Huskers.

The Huskers worked hard to get in on at least 35 of the top 100 players in the country. Their search for a quarterback also took them through a who's who of All-American run/pass quarterbacks.

Looking for a Frazier clone, the Huskers worked to get visits from Odell James of Aldine (MacArthur), Texas; Rashard Casey of Hoboken, N.J.; Tee Martin of Mobile (Williamson), Ala.; Quincy Carter of Decatur (Southwest DeKalb), Ga.; Ortege Jenkins of Long Beach (Jordan), Calif.; and Kenton Evans of

Memphis (Westwood), Tenn.

Top 100 national talents like defensive tackle Eric Jefferson of Shreveport (Evangel), La.; defensive back Robert Pollard of Orange Park, Fla.; Mike Brown of Scottsdale (Saguaro), Ariz.; defensive back Joe Dawkins of Hackensack, N.J.; defensive end Damione Lewis of Sulphur Springs, Texas; running back Patrick Pass of Tucker, Ga.; and running back Daymon Carroll of Norristown, Pa., were just a few seriously considering the Huskers early on in the recruiting season.

Nebraska, Penn State, Ohio State, Tennessee, Southern California, Florida and Florida State were the most popular recruiting schools from the start and when the smoke cleared things pretty much remained that way.

Knowing they were playing in the national championship game, the Huskers wanted to have at least two impact recruiting weekends in December.

The first weekend in December, the Huskers concentrated on a trio of the top offensive linemen in the country in the Webb twins Joshua and Micah of Turlock, Calif., and Sasho Becvarovski of Crown Point (Lake Central), Ind.

The Webbs were on their first visit of the some of the nation's top football schools. UCLA, USC, Colorado and Tennessee were also set for visits early. Becvarovski wasn't looking to get away from home, but once in Lincoln, he realized right away that Nebraska was for him.

"I wanted to go to a school that is noted for it's offensive linemen and Nebraska is second to none," Becvarovski said.


Nebraska earned the first of three commitments from Missouri when down lineman David Webber put his recruiting to bed early by giving a verbal to the Huskers. In doing so Webber, one of the top players in the Midlands, decided to forget about possible visits to Alabama, Arkansas and Missouri.

The second weekend in December brought two of the top in-state talents to Lincoln in wide receiver J.R. Edwards of Lincoln (Southeast) and wide receiver John Gibson of Papillion (Papillion-LaVista). Pollard also made his way to Lincoln and with the Huskers continuing to look for the top offensive linemen in the country, brought in John Merandi of Lake Arrowhead, Calif., and Chad Ward of Kennewick (Riverview), Wash.

The Husker quarterback situation was put on center stage during the big December 15th weekend. Martin and James made it to Lincoln, both very interested in taking over for Frazier. Martin was also considering Tennessee and Auburn while James had already visited Baylor and Florida State.

Nebraska was also taking their shot at inside linebacker George Guidry out of Lake Charles (Washington-Marion), La. Guidry was interested in Notre Dame, Michigan, Florida and Michigan on his early list.

Jefferson also made his scheduled visit, but was leaning toward Illinois or Texas A&M. Plano, Texas, All-American offensive lineman Chris Valtetta also was in Lincoln to take a



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## 1996 SIGNEES

NAME	HT.	WT.	POS.	HOMETOWN (HIGH SCHOOL/JUCO)
<b>Dan ALEXANDER</b>	6-1	230	FB/LB	Wentzville, Mo.
<b>Sasho BECVAROVSKI</b>	6-5	255	OL	Crown Point, Ind. (Lake Central)
<b>Mike BROWN</b>	6-0	190	DB	Scottsdale, Ariz. (Saguaro)
<b>Ralph BROWN, II</b>	5-11	175	DB	Walnut, Calif. (Bishop Amat)
<b>J.R. EDWARDS</b>	6-2	175	REC	Lincoln, Neb. (Southeast)
<b>DeAngelo EVANS</b>	5-9	210	RB	Wichita, Kan. (Collegiate)
<b>Justin FERRELL</b>	6-4	290	OL	Mission, Texas (Sharyland)
<b>Clint FINLEY</b>	6-1	190	QB	Cuero, Texas
<b>John GIBSON</b>	6-0	185	REC/DB	Papillion, Neb. (LaVista)
<b>George GUIDRY</b>	6-3	225	DE	Lake Charles, La. (Wash.-Marion)
<b>Russ HOCHSTEIN</b>	6-4	240	OL	Hartington, Neb. (Cedar Catholic)
<b>Loran KAISER</b>	6-5	220	LB/DE	Farwell, Neb. (St. Paul)
<b>Willie MILLER</b>	6-1	225	FB	Omaha, Neb. (Bellevue West)
<b>Carlos POLK</b>	6-2	220	LB	Rockford, Ill. (Guilford)
<b>Robert POLLARD</b>	6-2	205	RB/DB	Orange Park, Fla.
<b>Khari REYNOLDS</b>	5-11	170	REC/DB	Mays Landing, N.J. (Egg Harbor Township)
<b>Steve WARREN</b>	6-3	275	DL	Springfield, Mo. (Kickapoo)
<b>David WEBBER</b>	6-3	275	OL/DL	St. Louis, Mo. (Hazelwood East)

### also receiving scholarships

<b>Luis ALMANZAR</b>	6-4	235	TE	Jersey City, N.J. (Dickinson)
<b>Lonnie FULTON</b>	6-5	250	OL	Grand Island, Neb.
<b>Eric JOHNSON</b>	6-1	195	DB	Phoenix, Ariz. (Alhambra)

look at the Husker program as was linebacker Steve Trejo out of Case Grande (Union), Ariz.

However, the 15th was really a weekend for running backs. If you don't think Nebraska can attract some running backs, then think again. All-American fullback Daniel Alexander of Wentzville, Mo.; halfback Vanez Gooch of Jacksonville (White), Fla.; and Rahshon Spikes of Meriden, Conn., were all high profile players who visited Nebraska.

Edwards and Becvarovski became the Huskers' fifth and sixth commitments soon after the 15th. Trejo was thought to be leaning the Huskers' way, along with Guidry, James, Martin and Gibson.

It was at this time the Huskers learned that once again they wouldn't get all the state's best in-state talent as Adam Hotz of Papillion (Papillion-LaVista), Neb., decided he wanted to play at Kansas State. Nebraska was never the front runner with Hotz and never expected to sign him, but would have liked to sign every talented in-state player.

Visitation weekends were put on hold as the Huskers prepared for their national championship game with Florida, but they still managed to rack up recruiting commitments. Gibson and Alexander both decided the recruiting process was a drag and joined the Husker bandwagon on December 26th.

Two days later, defensive

end/linebacker Loren Kaiser of Farwell (St. Paul), Neb., become the fifth in-state talent to stay at home.

Kaiser's commitment brought Nebraska's total to nine before the Fiesta Bowl game. With three players who were actually recruited a year ago but would count against this year's total, the number jumped to 12.

Offensive lineman Lonnie Fulton of Grand Island, Neb., and tight end Luis Almanzar of Dickinson, N.J., enrolled as part time students at the first of the year to save a year of eligibility. Fulton was working to rehab a repaired shoulder and Almanzar was getting his academics in order.

Prop-42 athlete Eric Johnson of Phoenix (Alhambra), Ariz., was the third. Johnson is progressing well and will compete this spring.

James decided to stay down in Texas and go to Baylor, Carter committed to Georgia Tech and Evans shocked everybody and committed to Memphis. With those three gone, Martin, Jenkins and Casey shot to the top of the Huskers' quarterback list and Nebraska coaches started looking around for other possibilities.

Commitment No. 10 came out of Mission (Sharyland), Texas. Defensive lineman Justin Farrell, labeled a strongman by many, reportedly benched 225 pounds 35 times.

Defensive tackle Steve Warren out of Springfield (Kickapoo), Mo., also ended his recruiting suspense.

With only six scholarships left to give and still in need of a quarterback, the Huskers looked for their defensive back recruits and the best available athletes. The Huskers fell out of the running for Pass who signed with Georgia. Defensive back Deek Cooper out of Evansville, Ind., chose Notre Dame and Jason Cooper out of Oakland, Calif., stayed out West at Oregon.

Nebraska scored two outstanding backers in inside standout Carlos Polk of Rockford (Guilford), Ill., and Guidry, who picked the Huskers over Oklahoma. Polk finished his career as one of the leading tacklers in Illinois state history.

With only four scholarships left to give, the Huskers scaled back the number of visits and worked to sign a quarterback and the best defensive backs they could find.

However, a Husker recruiting class wouldn't be complete without a player from New Jersey and speed receiver Khari Reynolds of Mays Landing (Egg Harbor Township) decided he would bring his 10.5 (100 meter) speed to Lincoln.

Mike Brown provided the first boost in the secondary. Rated as the number one defensive back in the country, he chose the Huskers over UCLA and Oregon.

The Huskers also entertained top 10 defensive backs Damien Allen of LaVerne (Damien), Calif., and Ralph Brown, II of Walnut (Bishop Amat), Calif., and a new quarterback recruit in Clint Finley out of Cuero, Texas.

The Husker quarterback picture disintegrated when Martin switched commitments from Tennessee to Auburn. Casey decided Lincoln was too cold for him. However, he chose Penn State which indicates weather wasn't the true decision.

Finley was set to sign with Texas A&M or Texas, but once he visited Nebraska he decided he would be their quarterback of the future. Lindsay committed to Oklahoma State, but the Huskers continued to recruit him to the very end.

The Huskers struck gold in the secondary at the end with Pollard and Ralph Brown, II choosing the Huskers. In all, the Huskers ended up with three of the top 10 defensive backs in the country. That's not counting the fact that super athletes John Gibson and J. R. Edwards could wind up playing on that side of the ball. ■





# Nebraska's Big Haul

*Defending national champs win first Big 12 recruiting race over runners-up Colorado, Texas and Baylor*

**By JAMES HALE**

**W**ith the emergence of the Big 12 next season, the 1996 recruiting race had an interesting twist. This group of freshmen will be the first to play in the Big 12, setting up new battle lines that have never been crossed before.

What's ironic is that the Big 12 didn't set up any new recruiting wars, in fact the same schools have been recruiting against each other for years.

The first Big 12 recruiting championship belongs to Nebraska. The two-time defending national champions signed a class that included three of the top 10 defensive backs in the country, a record setting halfback, two All-American fullbacks, an All-American linebacker and the usual slew of great down linemen.

Injuries are all that kept Wichita (Collegiate), Kan., halfback **DeAngelo Evans** (5-foot-9, 210 pounds, 4.4 40-yard dash) from rewriting every rushing and scoring record in prep football. The Huskers reloaded in the secondary with **Robert Pollard** (6-2, 205, 4.4) of Orange Park, Fla.; **Mike Brown** (6-0, 190, 4.4) of Scottsdale (Saguaro), Ariz.; and **Ralph Brown** (5-11, 175, 4.5) of Walnut (Bishop Amat), Calif.

**George Guidry** (6-3, 225, 4.6) of

Lake Charles (Washington-Marion), La., is a top five linebacker nationally. **Willie Miller** (6-1, 225, 4.6) of Omaha (Bellevue West), Neb., and **Daniel Alexander** (6-1, 230, 4.5) of Wentzville, Mo., are two of the top eight fullbacks in the country. **Justin Ferrell** (6-4, 290, 5.0) of Mission (Sharyland), Texas, heads a solid group of linemen.

Rick Neuheisel put together another top-10 class with his first at Colorado. Quarterback **Adam Bledsoe** (6-5, 210, 4.8), the younger brother of New England Patriot star Drew Bledsoe, of Yakima (Eisenhower), Wash., has similar potential.

The Buffs signed a number of outstanding offensive linemen like **Tom Ashworth** (6-6, 240, 4.9) of Englewood (Cherry Creek), Colo., and **Jason Entzminger** (6-7, 300, 5.1) of Temple Hills (Archbishop Carroll), Md.

Colorado made its biggest recruiting impact on defense. **Sean Jarne** (6-6, 270, 4.9) is an All-American defensive tackle out of Anaheim (Esperanza), Calif. Defensive end **Ian Loper** (6-5, 235, 4.6) of San Diego (Point Loma), Calif., is a similar talent.

Texas put together one of the strongest classes of offensive and defensive linemen in the country.

On defense, the Longhorns rallied late to sign nose guard **Casey Hampton** (6-1, 300, 5.0) of Galveston (Ball), Texas; defensive tackle **Derrick Curry** (6-4, 265, 4.9) of Houston (Jones); defensive tackle **Cedric Woodard** (6-3, 280, 4.9) of Sweeny, Texas; and defensive end **Will Goodloe** (6-5, 245, 4.8) of San Diego (Monte Vista).

The Longhorns also scored big on the offensive line with All-American **Roger Roesler** (6-6, 300, 5.0) of Round Rock, Texas. **Richard Land** (6-7, 310, 5.1) of Brentwood, Tenn., is another All-American. Texas' leading regular-season prep rusher, **Tony**

**Ellis** (6-0, 193, 4.4) of Brownsville (Hanna), rounds out the UT class.

Baylor put together one of the most interesting classes in the country. The talent in this class ranks in the top five in the country. However as many as 12 of the signees are currently academically ineligible, mak-



**Brandon Daniels (left) helped Oklahoma secure a top recruiting class. Texas A&M signed Eric Jennings (right) to bolster the secondary.**

ing the Bears hard to rank. Quarterback **Odell James** (6-4, 205, 4.5) of Aldine (MacArthur), Texas, is ranked as one of the best run/pass quarterbacks in the country. James still has a way to go in the classroom.

Oklahoma had troubles in the beginning, picked up some speed and then faltered a bit at the end. Despite the handicap of getting a late start, first-year coach John Blake pulled in a very talented class.

Ada, Okla., superstar **Brandon Daniels** (6-0, 180, 4.4) is one of the best athletes in the country and can be used in many positions. All-American offensive lineman **Scott Kempenich** (6-7, 285, 5.0) of Wagoner, Okla., and speedy defensive back **Mike Woods** (5-11, 170, 4.4) of Del City, Okla., are top players from in-state that the Sooners signed.

For the first time in three years Texas A&M didn't win the conference recruiting title. The Aggies missed on one of their biggest needs, defensive linemen, signing only one Texas top-50 talent in **Stephen**



**Already stocked at running back, Nebraska signed All-American DeAngelo Evans (left) and Texas signed Tony Ellis (right).**



**Young** (6-1, 275, 5.0) of Jefferson, Texas. The Aggies loaded up in the secondary with six outstanding prospects. Temple, Texas, speedster **Jeff Wilson** (5-10, 175, 4.4) runs a 10.2 (100-meters) and **Eric Jennings** (5-11, 180, 4.4) of Mount San Antonio JC, Calif., is a top-100 JUCO talent.

Oklahoma State continues to get an upgrade in talent under head coach Bob Simmons. The Cowboys landed talented quarterback **Tony Lindsay** (6-2, 190, 4.5) out of Denver (Jefferson), Colo.

Kansas State reloaded at quarterback with **Jonathan Beasley** (6-2, 210, 4.7) of Glendale (Cactus), Ariz., one of the nations top-10 signal callers. **David Allen** (5-10, 175, 4.4) of Liberty, Mo., will give Beasley a target to throw to.

Texas Tech loaded up at the skill positions, signing 11 athletes who play either running back or defensive back. **Shaun Carr** (5-9, 175, 4.4) of Sweetwater, Texas, heads the running back corps after rushing for 2,279 yards last season.

Glen Mason decided to stay at Kansas after originally accepting the head job at Georgia. Mason said one of the reasons he stayed was because of the recruiting class his staff was putting together.

It may not have turned out as good as Mason had hoped, but running back **Arland Bruce** (5-10, 180, 4.4) of Olathe (North), Kan., and offensive lineman **Bob Schmidt** (6-1, 255, 5.0) of the same school have star quality.

Iowa State signed **Darren Davis** (5-8, 185, 4.4) of Miami (Southridge), Fla. Davis is the brother of Heisman Trophy candidate Troy Davis.

Missouri once again brings up the rear of the recruiting race. The Tigers can't keep their best talent in-state losing each of the state's top five. Running back **Barry Odom** (6-2, 200, 4.6) of Ada, Okla., is a solid performer on offense. ■



**Odell James (left) and Tony Lindsay (right) add depth at quarterback to Baylor and Oklahoma State, respectively.**

# BIG 12 TOP FIVE

## QUARTERBACKS

PLAYER	HT.	WT.	40	HOMETOWN (H.S.)	SCHOOL
1) Odell James	6-4	205	4.5	Aldine (MacArthur), Texas	Baylor
2) Adam Bledsoe	6-5	210	4.8	Yakima (Eisenhower), Wash.	Colorado
3) Jonathan Beasley	6-2	210	4.7	Glendale (Cactus), Ariz.	Kansas State
4) Tony Lindsay	6-2	190	4.6	Denver (Jefferson), Colo.	Okl. State
5) Clint Finley	6-1	190	4.5	Cuero, Texas	Nebraska

## RUNNING BACKS

1) DeAngelo Evans	5-9	210	4.4	Wichita (Collegiate), Kan.	Nebraska
2) Elijah Burkins	5-8	186	4.4	Port Arthur (Jefferson), Texas	Baylor
3) Darrell Bush	5-10	180	4.4	Jersey Village, Texas	Baylor
4) Brandon Daniels	6-0	180	4.5	Ada, Okla.	Oklahoma
5) Arland Bruce	5-9	178	4.6	Olathe (North), Kan.	Kansas

## WIDE RECEIVERS

1) Eric McCready	6-4	185	4.5	Englewood (Cherry Creek), Colo.	Colorado
2) Mo Little	6-3	175	4.4	Coffeyville (J.C.), Kan.	Oklahoma
3) Mike Woods	5-11	170	4.4	Del City, Okla.	Oklahoma
4) Ryan Nunez	5-9	170	4.4	Austin (Westlake), Texas	Colorado
5) Alvin Porter	6-0	175	4.5	Dallas (Adamson), Texas	Okl. State

## TIGHT ENDS

1) Matt Anderson	6-3	230	4.6	Moore, Okla.	Oklahoma
2) Adren Dudley	6-5	230	4.7	Blinn (J.C.), Texas	Texas A&M
3) Ahndre Patterson	6-4	250	4.6	Transfer from Alcorn State	Texas Tech
4) Brady McConnell	6-5	250	4.7	Quinn (Wall), S.D.	Colorado
5) Milford Stephenson	6-3	215	4.7	Houston (Hastings)	Kansas State

## OFFENSIVE LINEMEN

1) Chris Valletta	6-4	285	5.3	Plano, Texas	Texas A&M
2) Scott Kempenich	6-7	285	5.2	Wagoner, Okla.	Oklahoma
3) Sasho Becvarovski	6-5	255	4.8	St. John (Lake Central), Ind.	Nebraska
4) Roger Roesler	6-6	300	5.0	Round Rock, Texas	Texas
5) Richard Land	6-7	310	5.2	Brentwood, Tenn.	Texas

## DEFENSIVE LINEMEN

1) Sean Jarne	6-6	270	4.8	Anaheim (Espenaza), Calif.	Colorado
2) Steve Williams	6-5	270	4.8	Sapulpa, Okla.	Oklahoma
3) Olenthy Brown	6-6	270	4.8	Navarro, (J.C.), Texas	Oklahoma
4) Steve Warren	6-3	275	4.9	Springfield (Kickapoo), Mo.	Nebraska
5) Derrick Curry	6-4	265	4.9	Houston (Jones)	Texas

## DEFENSIVE ENDS

1) Jesse Warren	6-6	250	4.8	Dallas (Carter)	Colorado
2) Cornelius Burton	6-6	250	4.7	Houston (Lamar)	Oklahoma
3) Will Goodloe	6-5	245	4.7	San Diego (Monte Vista)	Texas
4) Ian Loper	6-5	235	4.7	San Diego (Point Loma)	Texas
5) Ryan Allen	6-5	252	4.6	Enid, Okla.	Oklahoma

## LINEBACKERS

1) George Guidry	6-3	225	4.6	Lake Charles (Wash.-Marion), La.	Nebraska
2) Eddrick Brooks	6-4	225	4.6	Aldine, Texas	Baylor
3) Chris Thierry	6-2	226	4.6	Baytown (Lee), Texas	Texas A&M
4) Kyle Cabral	6-2	215	4.6	Boulder (Fairview), Colo.	Colorado
5) Fred Rogers	6-3	235	4.6	Dallas (Adamson)	Baylor

## DEFENSIVE BACKS

1) Mike Brown	5-11	195	4.4	Scottsdale (Saguaro), Ariz.	Nebraska
2) Elan Edwards	6-0	175	4.5	Boulder (Longmont), Colo.	Colorado
3) Ralph Brown	5-11	175	4.5	Walnut (Bishop Amat), Calif.	Nebraska
4) Eric Jennings	5-11	180	4.4	Mount San Antonio (JC), Calif.	Texas A&M
5) John Gibson	6-0	185	4.4	Papillion (Papillion-LaVista), Neb.	Nebraska



# Daniel ALEXANDER

**FULLBACK/LINEBACKER**



**HEIGHT: 6-1 • WEIGHT: 230**

**SPEED: 4.7 • BIRTHDAY: March 17, 1978**

**SCHOOL:** Wentzville, Mo.

**OFFENSE/DEFENSE RUN:** Multiple/Split 4-4

**HONORS:** Senior year — All-American (*Super Prep Magazine*, *National Recruiting Advisor*); All-Big Eight Region (*Bluechip Report*); All-State; All-District; All-Conference; All-Metro

**OTHER SPORTS:** Wrestling — finished second in the state in 1995

## High School Head Coach — Scott Swofford:

"Although he comes from a family of athletes, he never played football until high school. He's come a long way in a short time, and that's a tribute to what a hard worker he is. In addition to rushing for so many yards, he blocked for our I-back, who also gained over 1,000 yards. He's going to a great program that will help him reach his full potential. He's a great player, a great person and we expect great things from him."

## Tom Osborne:

"Dan has a great combination of speed and strength. He will play fullback or linebacker for us. He's an outstanding athlete. As a wrestler, he just seems to pin everybody."

## Why Daniel Chose Nebraska:

"I really liked the people and the different ways the team helps out in the community. I felt what the football team does for other people was incredible. Football is very important in Nebraska, and I wanted to be a part of something like that."

## CAPSULE

Alexander is a powerful runner with the ability to run through you or away from you. He'll choose to run through you more often than not, but showed tremendous running instincts in rushing for 1,526 yards (8.3 average) and 18 touchdowns. Those statistics are remarkably consistent with the 1,587 yards he gained as a junior. Blessed with great drive, Alexander is also incredibly strong with a 360 bench and 550 squat. Plans to major in computer programming.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Illinois, Iowa, Indiana, Missouri

**Son of Katherine and Bennie Alexander**

# Sasho BECVAROVSKI

**OFFENSIVE LINE**



**HEIGHT: 6-5 • WEIGHT: 255**

**SPEED: 5.0 • BIRTHDAY: November 23, 1976**

**SCHOOL:** Crown Point (Lake Central), Ind.

**OFFENSE RUN:** Double Wing

**HONORS:** Senior year — All-American (*Super Prep Magazine*); All-Midwest Region (*Bluechip Report*); All-State; All-Area

**OTHER SPORTS:** None

## High School Head Coach — Elmer Britton:

"We used him on the offensive line and at tight end. Since we're primarily a running team, he did more blocking than pass catching. Nebraska will probably use him on the offensive line. He's a big, strong boy. He's got great, quick feet and is an excellent blocker."

## Tom Osborne:

"Sasho was ranked as one of the top offensive line prospects in the country, and I would have to agree with that assessment. He's got all the skills that you look for in an offensive lineman and will be able to get bigger and stronger once we get him into our weight facility."

## Why Sasho Chose Nebraska:

"Nebraska is a different way of life, and I liked it a lot. Their program was different than others I had looked at. They really emphasize football. Nebraska has had the best program in the country the past two years, and that was a major factor in my decision. I like the guys who showed me around. Everybody was just so nice."

## CAPSULE

Becvarovski is one of the best run blockers on the prep scene, but showed off his total athletic ability by catching 11 passes for 256 yards and three touchdowns as a tight end. An excellent leader, he likes to get involved in a number of projects, acting as treasurer of the student council at Lake Central. A three-year starter, Becvarovski is a quick learner and seems to be the proto-type NU offensive lineman. Grew up in Indiana, but his parents are natives of Macedonia. He also speaks English, Greek, Macedonian and Serbian.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Iowa, Wisconsin, Miami, Texas, Indiana

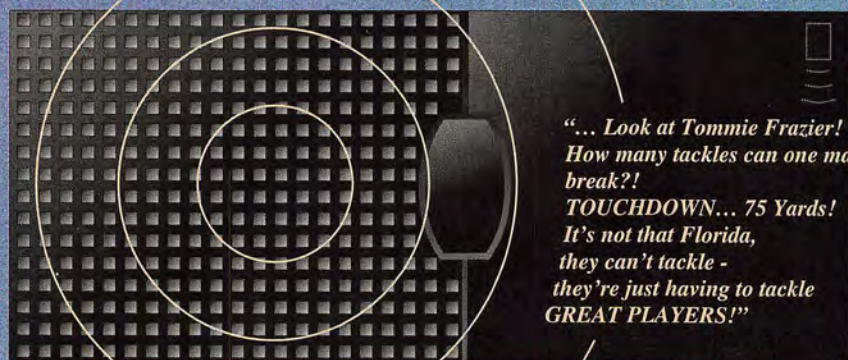
**Son of Lepa and Tony Becvarovski**



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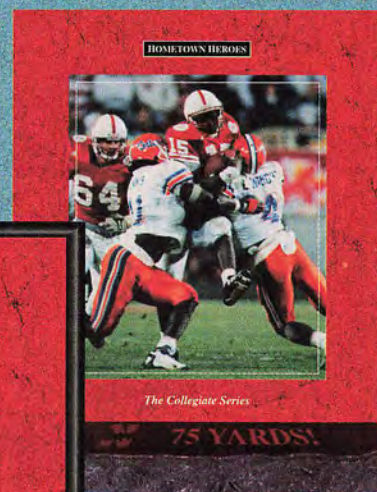
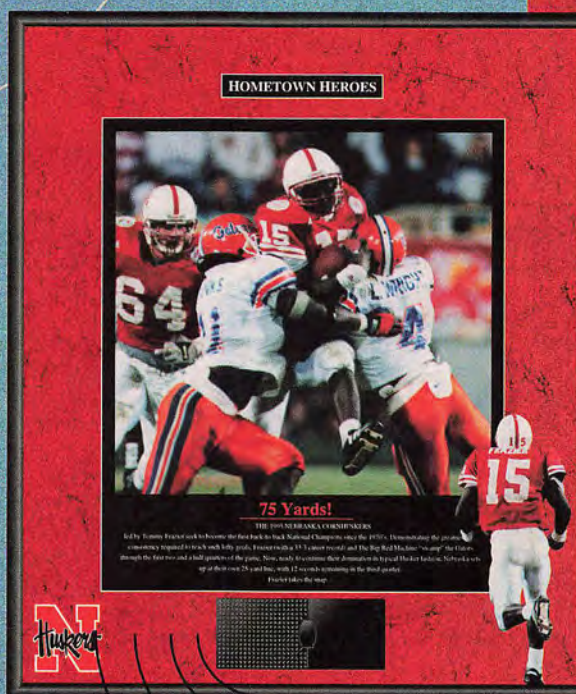
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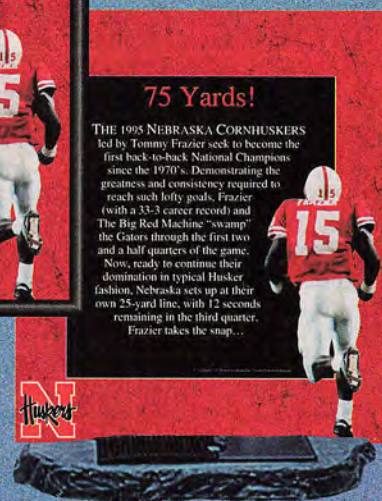
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# Mike BROWN

DEFENSIVE BACK



HEIGHT: 6-0 • WEIGHT: 190

SPEED: 4.5 • BIRTHDAY: February 13, 1978

**SCHOOL:** Scottsdale (Saguaro), Ariz.

**OFFENSE/DEFENSE RUN:** Multiple/4-4

**HONORS:** Senior year — Class 4A Player of the Year; second team All-American (*USA Today*); All-State; All-American (*Super Prep Magazine*, *National Recruiting Advisor*); Dream Team (*Bluechip Report*); Best in the West (*Long Beach Press-Telegram*)

**OTHER SPORTS:** Baseball

## High School Head Coach — Walt Sword:

"Mike did a lot of great things for us offensively. He averaged nearly nine yards a carry and scored a touchdown every sixth or seventh carry. That kind of threat made it easier on our play calling. He has all the skills. Not a true speed back, but is very quick and explosive. He can run through you, around you and by you. I very rarely saw the first guy ever bring him down. Defensively, he was a blur running our alleys. Teams would try to run a sweep on us and he would be on them in no time laying a big hit."

## Tom Osborne:

"Mike comes from a very fine family. You can't find anything wrong with Mike Brown. I watched him on film as a junior, and he just jumped out at me. We think he is going to be a great player for us."

## Why Mike Chose Nebraska:

"My main priority was finding a school where I would feel comfortable. I thought the players and coaches at Nebraska got along real well. I was also looking to get out of the state. Many people thought I was going to USC. Honestly, I don't know where they got their information. I had an open mind, and Nebraska impressed me the best."

## CAPSULE

Brown was rated as the top defensive back in the country according to many. He was definitely one of the top 20 prospects in the nation. His 2,084 yards (9.6 average) and 35 touchdowns certainly presents a case for Brown to line up as a Husker tailback. However, he seems destined for the secondary. Even if he lines up as a corner, he'll touch the ball on special teams where he's a great kick returner. He took one back 80 yards for a touchdown as a senior.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Southern Cal, Oregon, Colorado  
Son of Susan and Bruce Freedman & Samuel Brown, Jr.

# Ralph BROWN, II

DEFENSIVE BACK



HEIGHT: 5-11 • WEIGHT: 175

SPEED: 4.4 • BIRTHDAY: September 9, 1978

**SCHOOL:** Walnut (Bishop Amat), Calif.

**OFFENSE/DEFENSE RUN:** Multiple/4-3

**HONORS:** Senior year — All-American (*Parade*, *Super Prep Magazine*, *Bluechip Report*, *National Recruiting Advisor*); second-team All-American (*USA Today*); Best in the West (*Long Beach Press-Telegram*); Back of the Year (*Los Angeles Times*); Player of the Year (CIF-SS)

**OTHER SPORTS:** Track

## High School Head Coach — Tom Salter:

"We have had a number of great football players at Bishop Amat, and Ralph is one of the best. He was a great running back for us and seemed to play better against the best competition. He was a great defensive back for us, too and will probably play on that side of the ball at Nebraska. He's a great player and one that Nebraska fans are going to love to watch."

## Tom Osborne:

"Ralph is from a very fine football school in the Los Angeles area. He was also a standout running back, but prefers to play defense. We think he has great quickness and coverage ability. He's an outstanding athlete. He was heavily recruited, as was Mike Brown, so we're pleased he committed."

## Why Ralph Chose Nebraska:

"I thought I played for the best in high school, and I wanted to continue to play with the best in college. Nebraska has been the best college football team in the country the last two years, and this is something I just couldn't pass up."

## CAPSULE

Regarded as one of the top 100 players in the country, Brown carries the nickname 'Brickwall,' which signifies his style of play. Brown loves to hit and carries an aggressive attitude with him in making 57 tackles and six interceptions. Brown was also an excellent tailback, leading Bishop Amat to the CIF Division title last year. He finished seventh in the state in rushing with 2,246. He scored the game-winning touchdown in the Lancers' Division I championship win over Los Angeles Loyola.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Colorado, USC, UCLA

Son of Debra and Ralph Brown

**J.R.**

# EDWARDS

**WIDE RECEIVER****HEIGHT: 6-2 • WEIGHT: 180****SPEED: 4.5 • BIRTHDAY: December 7, 1977****SCHOOL:** Lincoln (Southeast), Neb.**OFFENSE RUN:** I-Formation, Split T**HONORS:** Senior year — All-State; SuperState; Preseason All-America (*Bluechip Report*)**OTHER SPORTS:** Basketball — honorable mention All-American (*Street & Smith's*); All-State**High School Head Coach — Chuck Mizerski:**

"He was our leading receiver, and we ran all kinds of formations offensively just so we could try to get one-on-one coverage on him. He finished the year one reception short of the state record for receptions in a year. There is absolutely no question about his athleticism. He's an outstanding athlete and will fit in well at Nebraska. He is the most athletic player I have coached in 27 years."

**Tom Osborne:**

"J.R. is a very fine athlete who could play on the college level in basketball as well. He's originally from Indiana and has been in Lincoln for only two years. We think he's an outstanding receiver, but could really play any skill position for us with his great athletic ability."

**Why J.R. Chose Nebraska:**

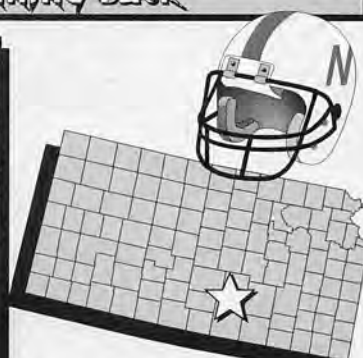
"I knew after one visit that Nebraska would be my choice. I need my parents' support both financially and emotionally. I just didn't think it would be conducive to go somewhere else. I think Nebraska has great athletes. They'll put me in position to show what I can do. When they told me I had a chance to play right away, it was like music to my ears."

**CAPSULE**

Edwards' senior season was spectacular as he finished with 54 catches for 814 yards and six touchdowns. The grabs were the second most in state history, and he wasn't bad on special teams, either. He returned 11 punts for 139 yards and 11 kickoffs for 264 yards. When everything added up, Edwards had 1,271 total yards last year. On defense, he intercepted three and made 40 tackles. Edwards had to choose between football and basketball. Syracuse, Villanova and Oklahoma tried to get him to play college hoops.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Kansas State**Son of Janet and Dennis Banks****DeAngelo**

# EVANS

**RUNNING BACK****HEIGHT: 5-9 • WEIGHT: 210****SPEED: 4.4 • BIRTHDAY: December 13, 1976****SCHOOL:** Wichita (Collegiate), Kan.**OFFENSE RUN:** I-Formation**HONORS:** Senior year — All-American (*USA Today*, *Super Prep Magazine*, *National Recruiting Advisor*); Player of the Year in Kansas (*Associated Press*); Dream Team (*Bluechip Report*)**OTHER SPORTS:** Basketball; Track**High School Head Coach — Mike Gehr:**

"Evans exemplifies the kind of backs Nebraska has had. He's very strong and very fast, but his No. 1 asset may be his vision. He's got outstanding vision. He sees the entire field well and goes where he can to make the biggest play. At 5-foot-9, 215 he's quite a load already as a high school player. At Nebraska, he'll just get bigger and stronger."

**Tom Osborne:**

"DeAngelo is a young man with a great deal of speed. He's a very powerful back. He's one of the top backs in the country and was in our football camp last summer. He committed to us very early, and we feel fortunate to have him. He comes from a very fine family."

**Why DeAngelo Chose Nebraska:**

"The Nebraska coaching staff was a major plus, and I felt that coach (Turner) Gill would also be honest with me. Nebraska is not afraid to play freshmen early, and I think that opportunity will be there for me. It's always been a childhood dream to play for Nebraska, and I can't wait to actually play in front of that sold-out crowd in Memorial Stadium. I just couldn't get Nebraska out of my mind."

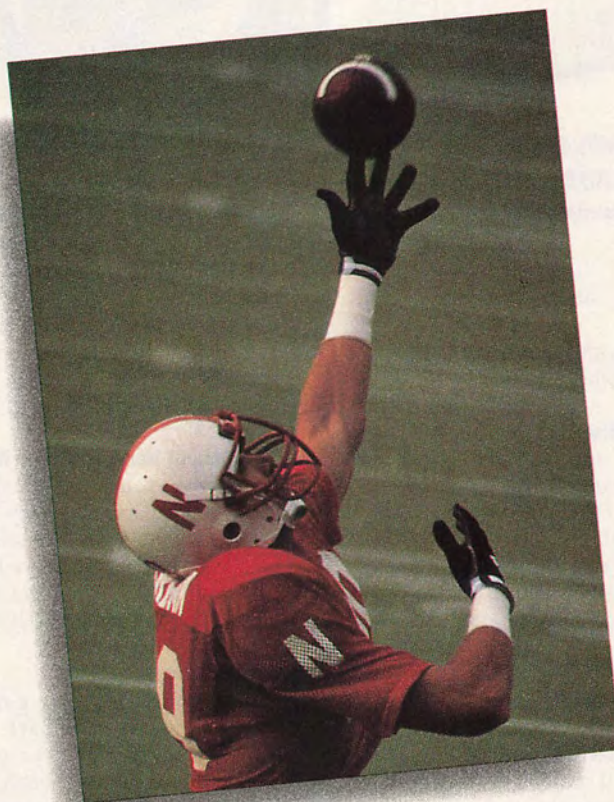
**CAPSULE**

Evans finished his prep career as one of the most storied running backs in the history of the game. Despite an injury filled senior season (he missed six games with an ankle injury), Evans finished as the No. 4 rusher all-time nationally with 8,473 yards. His 131 touchdowns were good enough for third-best nationally. Committed to Notre Dame over the summer, but changed his mind when his father objected.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Notre Dame, Kansas State, Miami, Kansas**Son of Earnestine and Eric Evans**



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# Justin FERRELL

OFFENSIVE LINE



HEIGHT: 6-4 • WEIGHT: 290

SPEED: 4.9 • BIRTHDAY: January 25, 1978

**SCHOOL:** Mission (Sharyland), Texas

**OFFENSE/DEFENSE RUN:** Pro-I/4-3

**HONORS:** Senior year — All-American (*Super Prep Magazine*, *Bluechip Report*); All-District; All-Valley; All-Area; honorable mention All-State; Who's Who

**OTHER SPORTS:** None

## High School Head Coach Pat Dowling:

"He's extremely strong. Not only one of the strongest high school players I've ever been around, but one of the strongest people I've ever been around. He benches 500 pounds, power cleans 375 and he's only 17 years old. I'm not sure where Nebraska will play him. They recruited him for his combination of size, strength and ability to run. If I had to guess, I'd say he'll play offensively. But that's Nebraska's decision to make."

## Tom Osborne:

"Justin has already added some 25 pounds to his frame just during the recruiting process. He is a fanatic weight lifter and could probably play on either side of the ball. He has good speed for a man his size. He is one of the most dedicated people I've run across. He'll talk to you forever about what it takes to play (football). I think he'll make a tremendous impact here."

## Why Justin Chose Nebraska:

"The coaching staff and the attitude of the team was tremendous. It was the situation I was looking for. They don't have a cocky attitude like some Florida schools, but do have a confident attitude because they know how to win."

## CAPSULE

Ferrell was a four-year letterman in football and got better each season. His junior year he played offensive tackle primarily and saw limited time on the defensive side. To solidify the defense during his senior year, he moved to middle linebacker and played very little in the offensive line. Incredibly strong, he has a 500 bench, 560 squat, 375 clean and 460 incline. He can bench 225 pounds 35 times during a set. Nebraska coaches say he is probably the strongest player they've ever had on campus.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Texas Christian, Air Force

Son of Lynn and James Ferrell

# Clint FINLEY

QUARTERBACK



HEIGHT: 6-1 • WEIGHT: 190

SPEED: 4.5 • BIRTHDAY: March 27, 1977

**SCHOOL:** Cuero, Texas

**OFFENSE RUN:** Wing T

**HONORS:** Senior year — Class 3A Player of the Year; Texas Top 100 (*Dallas Morning News*); All-American (*Super Prep Magazine*, *Bluechip Report*); All-Southwest (*National Recruiting Advisor*)

**OTHER SPORTS:** Track

## High School Head Coach — Mick Finley:

"People compare Clint to Odell James, but I think that Clint is a much better passer. He's got real good speed and has a strong arm. What Nebraska's offense offers is what he does best. He did a lot of the same things for us that Tommie Frazier did for them. We loved having him run our offense. He's just a very balanced football player."

## Tom Osborne:

"He's down in an area where we didn't have much contact, so we feel very fortunate to have been able to recruit him. He plays quarterback, but he's a young man who has the potential to play defensive back or wingback. He has excellent speed and is a very physical player."

## Why Clint Chose Nebraska:

"I think people thought I would go to one of the Texas schools. But it was Nebraska which provided me the best opportunity for me to succeed. They were in on me from the start. I know they were also in on Odell James (quarterback who signed with Baylor). He got more publicity than I did, but we did the same things. We both took our teams to state during our sophomore year."

## CAPSULE

The only quarterback to sign with Nebraska this season, Finley was ranked among the top 10 quarterbacks on the *Dallas Morning News*' Top 100 state recruits list. Finley, a three year starter, led Cuero to the Class 3A semifinals and a 13-2 record as a senior. He ran for 834 yards and passed for 1,789 and 20 touchdowns. Even more impressively, he didn't throw an interception during the regular season. That streak, however, came to halt in the playoffs when he was picked off once. During his prep career, he accumulated more than 6,000 yards of total offense. Missed three games last year with a knee bruise.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Alabama, Texas, Texas A&M

Son of Patty and Mick Finley

# John GIBSON

RECEIVER/DEFENSIVE BACK



HEIGHT: 6-0 • WEIGHT: 185

SPEED: 4.4 • BIRTHDAY: February 10, 1977

**SCHOOL:** Papillion (LaVista), Neb.

**OFFENSE/DEFENSE RUN:** Multiple/Split 4

**HONORS:** Senior year — SuperState (Lincoln Journal-Star); All-American (Super Prep Magazine, National Recruiting Advisor); Gatorade Circle of Champions All-America Team; Top Player in Big Eight Region (Bluechip Report)

**OTHER SPORTS:** Track; Basketball

**High School Head Coach — Gene Suhr:**

"He played both offense and defense for us. He never came off the field. Nebraska didn't recruit him specifically for offense or defense, but because he could play both well. He's an outstanding football player. I think he'll start out at Nebraska offensively as a wide receiver, but they're not ruling out defense. He was the Gatorade Player of the Year in Nebraska."

**Tom Osborne:**

"Probably the most heavily recruited player in the state of Nebraska this year. John has excellent speed. We'd like him to start out as a receiver, but we also think he's potentially a very good defensive back. He has great speed and is a very good athlete."

**Why John Chose Nebraska:**

"When I sat down to really think things through, I couldn't think of any reason why I shouldn't go to Nebraska. They were No. 1 in football and academics, close to home and I already had so many friends that either were going to Nebraska or were wanting to go. I liked the coaches, players, people and everything just came together. It will be nice to be so close to home."

## CAPSULE

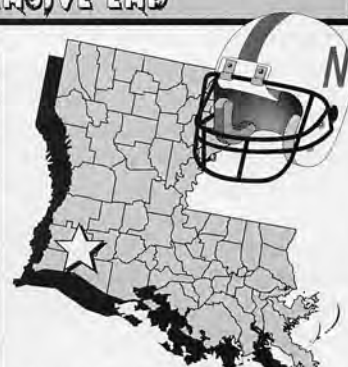
Gibson was the consensus top player in Nebraska after starting for three seasons as a wide receiver and strong safety at Papillion-LaVista. Last year, Gibson exploded with 36 catches for 838 yards, rushed for 124 more and managed 58 solo tackles on defense. He is also a threat returning kicks (12 for 283 yards) and punts (160 for 308 yards). An incredible athlete, Gibson will start out at wide receiver with the possible move to safety down the road.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Iowa State, Kansas State, Wyoming, Colorado State

Son of Lanora and John Gibson

# George GUIDRY

DEFENSIVE END



HEIGHT: 6-3 • WEIGHT: 230

SPEED: 4.6 • BIRTHDAY: September 10, 1977

**SCHOOL:** Lake Charles (Washington-Marion), La.

**DEFENSE RUN:** 4-4

**HONORS:** Senior year — All-American (Super Prep Magazine; National Recruiting Advisor); All-Southeast Region (Bluechip Report); second-team All-American (USA Today); All-State

**OTHER SPORTS:** Track; Basketball

**High School Head Coach — Fred Galloway:**

"He can change somebody's game plan quicker than any other player on the field. People can't run through him and because of his speed, they can't run around him. His strength and speed are his biggest assets, but he can also work on those by the time he hits the college playing field. I honestly think that he can be an All-American at the next level. He'll be spending all year concentrating on football and they'll be teaching him the finer points."

**Tom Osborne:**

"George Guidry is a big guy who returned kickoffs and some punts. Tony Samuel (Nebraska outside linebackers coach) felt he was the best rush end prospect that he knew of in the country this year."

**Why George Chose Nebraska:**

"I was really impressed with the early visit that I took to Lincoln. It was all football business and that was what I was looking for. It's not a party school. I'm going there to get an education and play the best type of football."

## CAPSULE

A four-year starter, Guidry seems tailor-made as a middle linebacker for Nebraska. Blessed with a 375 pound bench, Guidry ripped through opposing blockers for 42 solo tackles as teams ran away from his defensive end spot. As a junior, he played in the middle and managed 89 tackles, 10 sacks and recovered six fumbles. He is so talented as a defensive player, that he should never see action on the other side of the ball as he did on the prep level. As a fullback he rushed for 600 yards and 12 touchdowns as a senior. Big, strong and incredibly fast, Guidry was ranked as the fifth best linebacker prospect in the country by Super Prep Magazine.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Michigan, Miami, Florida, Oklahoma, Louisiana State

Son of Linda and George Guidry



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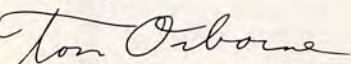
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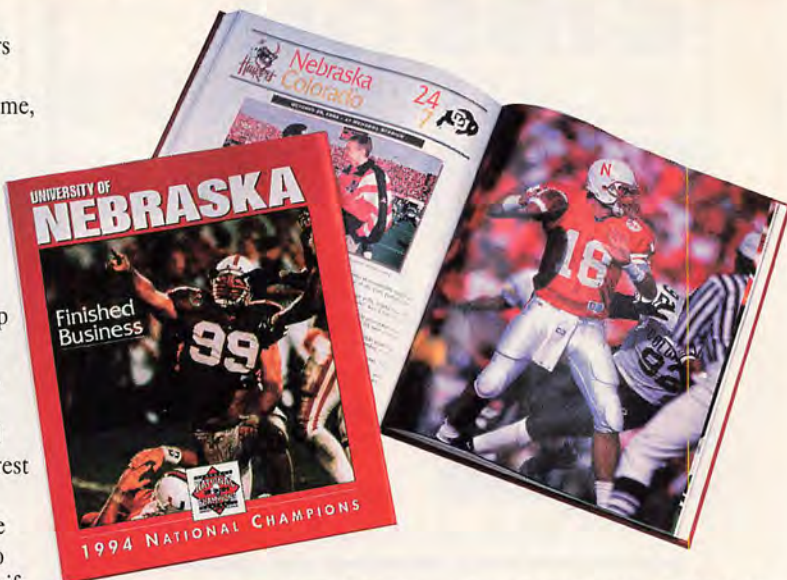
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

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# Russ HOCHSTEIN

## OFFENSIVE LINE



**HEIGHT: 6-4 • WEIGHT: 240**  
**SPEED: 5.0 • BIRTHDAY: October 7, 1977**

**SCHOOL:** Hartington (Cedar Catholic), Neb.

**OFFENSE RUN:** I-Back, Multiple Sets

**HONORS:** Senior year — SuperState (*Lincoln Journal-Star*); All-Nebraska (*Omaha World*); All-Midlands (*Super Prep Magazine*); All-Big Eight Region (*Bluechip Report*); All-State; All-Class

**OTHER SPORTS:** Basketball; Track; Baseball

### High School Head Coach — Terry Kathol:

"He has been a four-year starter on offense and defense. Through his four years he has played every position on our offensive line, so he's very knowledgeable of all the different blocking assignments. He's very hard-working and I think that's the main reason he'll fit in well at Nebraska. He understands that he'll have to keep working hard at his level of excellence."

### Tom Osborne:

"Not a heavily publicized player, but if you look at him on film, he's an outstanding player. He runs very well, and he has an outstanding frame. It may take him a year to get big enough to be where a lot of our offensive linemen are, but we think down the road he'll be a great player."

### Why Russ Chose Nebraska:

"Growing up in Nebraska, you have big dreams of playing for the Huskers. I have always gone to their summer camps. It had always been a goal of mine to get good enough so that I could get a scholarship there. Staying close to home is great and the fact that at Nebraska we will always have the potential to win a national championship, is a big positive."

### CAPSULE

Hochstein was a four-year starter at Cedar Catholic playing every position along the offensive line as well as defensive end and linebacker on defense. A solid fundamental player, he made 96 tackles last season. He plays with a controlled fury and has the perfect temperament for a future Husker lineman.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Kansas State, Iowa State, Wayne State

Son of Barb and Gayle Hochstein

# Loran KAISER

## DEFENSIVE END/LINEBACKER



**HEIGHT: 6-5 • WEIGHT: 220**  
**SPEED: 4.5 • BIRTHDAY: March 22, 1978**

**SCHOOL:** Farwell (St. Paul), Neb.

**OFFENSE/DEFENSE RUN:** Power I/4-3

**HONORS:** Senior year — All-Conference; All-Heartland; honorable mention All-State

**OTHER SPORTS:** Basketball

### High School Head Coach — Russ Baker:

"He played fullback and middle linebacker for us. I think Nebraska will use him on defense. He'll do well for them. He's got a big frame and he'll put on muscle mass at Nebraska and turn into a good rush defensive end or down defensive tackle. He's very quick and has very good technique."

### Tom Osborne:

"He's another player we didn't know a great deal about, but on film he really jumped out. He played middle linebacker, and he also played tight end and fullback. He plays point guard on the basketball team, so he has excellent agility and speed for a guy that size. He'll probably end up being a defensive lineman or a rush end."

### Why Loran Chose Nebraska:

"Going to Nebraska is something I have always wanted to do ever since I was a little kid growing up. You dream of playing at Nebraska if you grow up in the state. They have a great program. You can get a great education and they are serious about how they do things within that program."

### CAPSULE

Kaiser was a two-year starter at St. Paul going both ways at running back and inside linebacker. On offense, he rushed for 471 yards and four touchdowns in 1995. But it was on defense where he drew the Huskers' attention after racking up 130 tackles (83 solo). Kaiser showed off his outstanding athletic ability in basketball when he set a league record for assists with 30 in three games during the conference tournament a year ago. An excellent student, he is a National Honor Society Member and made a 22 on his ACT. Hopes to major in veterinary science.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Wyoming

Son of Ardie and Tom Kaiser



# Willie MILLER

FULLBACK



HEIGHT: 6-1 • WEIGHT: 225

SPEED: 4.6 • BIRTHDAY: September 17, 1978

**SCHOOL:** Bellevue (West), Neb.

**OFFENSE RUN:** Multiple

**HONORS:** Senior year — All-American, Midlands Offensive Player of the Year (*Super Prep Magazine*); All-Big Eight Region (*Bluechip Report*); All-Big 12 Region (*National Recruiting Advisor*); SuperState (*Lincoln Journal-Star*); All-Nebraska

**OTHER SPORTS:** Track

## High School Head Coach — John Faiman:

"He's very strong and has decent speed. But he's not a breakaway speed guy who's going to try to turn the corner on you every time. He's a great north-south runner who doesn't mess around at the line of scrimmage. He always falls forward. He's strong and hits the holes hard. He brings his pads with him. He's also a good student-athlete, a hard worker and when the time comes for him at Nebraska, he'll be able to contribute."

## Tom Osborne:

"Willie Miller had a great year at Bellevue West. He ran the ball very well. He has excellent speed and is a very powerful guy."

## Why Willie Chose Nebraska:

"I have never really wanted to play anywhere else. I know I am going to be a fullback in college and I know some people don't realize it, but Nebraska is the best program for a fullback to play at. Most of their fullbacks get a shot at the pros and you get a chance to make some great plays at their fullback position."

## CAPSULE

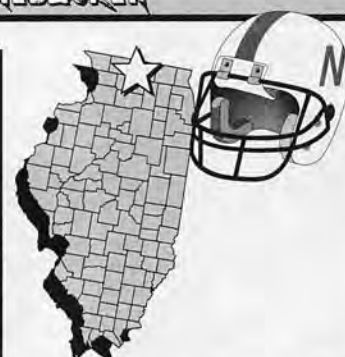
Miller emerged as one of the nation's best fullbacks after leading Class A in rushing with 1,527 yards and 18 touchdowns last season. Those totals raised his career mark to 3,062 despite a car accident limiting his action for much of his junior season. Miller, who gave the Huskers a verbal in October, is one of two fullbacks in this year's class. A great student, Miller posted a 4.7 GPA on a scale of 5.0.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** No other consideration

Son of Doris and Willie, Sr. Miller

# Carlos POKE

LINEBACKER



HEIGHT: 6-2 • WEIGHT: 220

SPEED: 4.6 • BIRTHDAY: February 22, 1977

**SCHOOL:** Rockford (Guilford), Ill.

**DEFENSE RUN:** 52

**HONORS:** Senior year — All-State; second team All-American (*USA Today*); Northern Illinois Conference 9 Defensive Player of the Year

**OTHER SPORTS:** Basketball

## High School Head Coach — Richard Infusino:

"Carlos was our defensive coordinator the last two years. He is able to play smash-mouth football and has a great nose for the ball. He was highly recruited, the problem was his grades. Some schools were scared off and stopped calling. But he got his grades in order and will be a good player on the next level."

## Tom Osborne:

"Carlos Polk is an outstanding linebacker. Of the players we rated as an inside linebacker type, we thought he was the best we saw in the country. We're very pleased he decided to come here. He's a very good all-around athlete, who plays basketball as well."

## Why Carlos Chose Nebraska:

"Most of the schools approached me about football, but Nebraska pushed academics. Football comes and goes, but my education will be with me forever. That was important to me. When my grades came up all the schools that had forgotten me started calling again. Nebraska stayed with me through the whole time. I'm not sure what I want to major in, but I don't want to just be a football player. Nebraska gives me the best opportunity to be a total student-athlete."

## CAPSULE

Polk leaves Guilford as one of the most celebrated tacklers in Illinois state history. A three-year starter, Polk made 453 career tackles (30 behind the line of scrimmage for 150 yards in losses) for the Vikings, as well as 10 fumble recoveries, seven blocked kicks and five interceptions. Last season he made 152 tackles and 13 sacks. In Guilford's first-round playoff loss to Bollinbrook, Polk made 30 tackles. Polk can bench 315 pounds and squats 525 pound.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Iowa State, Illinois, Wisconsin, Iowa

Son of Roberta and John Polk

# Robert POLLARD

**RUNNING BACK/DEFENSIVE BACK**



Rick Wilson/Florida Times Union



**HEIGHT: 6-2 • WEIGHT: 205**

**SPEED: 4.4 • BIRTHDAY: August 19, 1977**

**SCHOOL:** Orange Park, Fla.

**OFFENSE/DEFENSE RUN:** Wing T/4-4

**HONORS:** Senior year — All-American (*Parade*, *Super Prep Magazine*, *National Recruiting Advisor*); Dream Team (*Bluechip Report*); All-State

**OTHER SPORTS:** Basketball; Track; Baseball

**High School Head Coach — Bob Williams:**

"Robert is a very confident kid with a lot of ability. He's not afraid of competition. He has all the tools he'll need to be successful on the next level. He's one of the fiercest competitors I've ever coached."

**Tom Osborne:**

"Robert Pollard played both running back and defensive back. He has excellent speed. He could probably play any one of three spots — I-back, safety or outside line-backer — much like Terrell Farley and Jamel Williams are now playing. We don't have any one particular position in mind. He'll probably start out as a running back."

**Why Robert Chose Nebraska:**

"I waited until signing day because I basically wanted to hear everyone out. Choosing Nebraska goes way beyond the sports end of it. They have a high ratio of athletes graduate every year. They are also a great school and more importantly they are a running school. If things don't go well offensively, I won't mind switching to defense. I'm excited to go up there and be my own man for a while. I hope to major in business or computers and Nebraska is solid in both of those programs. I want to play in the pros someday, but I realize I can't play sports forever and I need an education to fall back on."

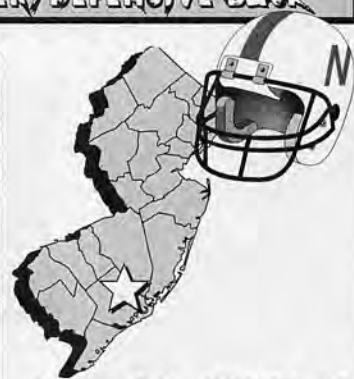
## CAPSULE

Pollard is one of the most dynamic offensive/defensive prep forces in the country. Last season as a tailback, Pollard rushed for nearly 1,000 yards in Florida's largest division, Class 6A. He also showed he has great hands catching passes for over 400 yards as a senior. Combined, he contributed 2,000 yards of total offense last season. On defense, he was Orange Park's second leading tackler with 70 stops. He will probably start out on offense at Nebraska.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Ohio State, Auburn, Florida  
Grandson of Jessie Green

# Khari REYNOLDS

**WIDE RECEIVER/DEFENSIVE BACK**



**HEIGHT: 5-11 • WEIGHT: 170**

**SPEED: 4.4 • BIRTHDAY: May 19, 1978**

**SCHOOL:** Mays Landing (Egg Harbor Township), N.J.

**OFFENSE/DEFENSE RUN:** Multiple/4-3

**HONORS:** Senior year — All-Eastern Region (*Bluechip Report*); honorable mention All-American (*USA Today*); second team All-South Jersey; All-Cape League

**OTHER SPORTS:** Track

**High School Head Coach — Gary Shultz:**

"Khari was a very fine athlete and was recognized as so since he was a freshman. He holds a lot of our sprint records. He runs good routes and has fine hands. Coach (Frank) Solich has talked about letting him return kicks as well as play receiver. We, like many schools, make our receivers block downfield. He has no problem putting his body on the line for the team. He's just a very versatile player."

**Tom Osborne:**

"He was not recruited by a lot of big schools, but we liked him on film. He's a very fine receiver and defensive back. He's run a 10.5 in the 100 meters."

**Why Khari Chose Nebraska:**

"Schools looked at my versatility. Being out here was a little bit of a concern at first, but in talking to people, they say if you have the talent you'll be found. Nebraska is supposed to be throwing the ball more. It was surprising that they came calling. I hadn't heard from a lot of the top teams. Playing receiver is my first choice, but I don't mind the idea of playing cornerback."

## CAPSULE

Speed is Reynolds' game. He set school records in the 100- and 200-meter dashes. Started as sophomore and played an important role as the No. 2 receiver. Last year, because of a lack of a veteran signal caller, Reynolds was moved to quarterback so that Egg Harbor Township could take advantage of his athleticism. This season, they moved a junior varsity kid up to quarterback so Reynolds was able to move back to receiver and strong safety. A National Honor Society Member, Reynolds posted a 3.8 GPA last year and plans to major in architectural engineering and design.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Maryland, Syracuse, Rutgers

Son of Carol and Eric Reynolds



# Steve WARREN

DEFENSIVE LINE



HEIGHT: 6-3 • WEIGHT: 275

SPEED: 4.9 • BIRTHDAY: January 22, 1978

**SCHOOL:** Springfield (Kickapoo), Mo.

**DEFENSE RUN:** 4-3

**HONORS:** Senior year — All-American, Big Eight Area Defensive Player of the Year (*National Recruiting Advisor*); All-American (*Super Prep Magazine*); All-Big Eight Region (*Bluechip Report*); All-State; honorable mention All-American (*USA Today*)

**OTHER SPORTS:** Track — set school record in the shot put with a throw of 55-7 1/4

## High School Head Coach — Kevin Byrne:

"Steve brought a lot of things to our football team. We knew the inside was always taken care of when he was in the lineup. In passing situations, he shut people down with his ability to rush. I believe he'll be a down lineman at Nebraska. We've never had anyone who dominated at his position like Steve. His best strength is his ability to move people after contact. Steve is such a total package both on and off the field. He's impossible to block one-on-one and is very quick off the ball."

## Tom Osborne:

"He's a big, powerful guy. We like him as a defensive lineman. He has good speed for a lineman. He actually carried the ball some last year."

## Why Steve Chose Nebraska:

"Nebraska's athletic and academic programs are top of the line. I just didn't see any other program matching Nebraska in those two areas and those were the main areas I was choosing a college for."

## CAPSULE

Warren is a very versatile athlete who could turn out to be a great Nebraska offensive lineman. However, it's on defense where he shined at Kickapoo racking up 165 tackles (71 solo), six sacks, one interception and led the team in hurries. Warren was the key to the school's semifinal finish of 11-2 (best in school history). An excellent singer, he has sung the national anthem at basketball games and is a member of a number of choirs. His older brother, Cliff, is a senior at Northwestern Oklahoma.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Illinois, Kansas

Son of Jean and Clifford Warren

# David WEBBER

OFFENSIVE/DEFENSIVE LINE



HEIGHT: 6-3 • WEIGHT: 275

SPEED: 4.9 • BIRTHDAY: August 17, 1977

**SCHOOL:** St. Louis (Hazelwood East), Mo.

**OFFENSE/DEFENSE RUN:** Multiple/40

**HONORS:** Senior year — National High School Athlete of the Year (*Bigger, Faster and Stronger Magazine*); All-Midland Region (*Super Prep Magazine*); All-Big Eight Offensive Line (*Bluechip Report*); All-Big 12 Region (*National Recruiting Advisor*); All-State; All-Metro

**OTHER SPORTS:** Wrestling — should battle fellow recruit, Daniel Alexander, in the state finals; Track

## High School Head Coach — Rick Gorzynski:

"I think he's just the kind of guy Nebraska looks for. He's a workaholic, especially with weights. He has phenomenal strength. He's also a big guy with good speed and loves the game. A real smash-mouth kind of player. I'm not sure if Nebraska will use him on the offensive line or the defensive side. He's got quick enough feet to play defense and he's tall enough."

## Tom Osborne:

"He's a guy who played both sides of the ball. The thing I was impressed with, is he played hard all the time. You look at the fourth quarter, and he was going just as hard as he was in the first (quarter). That's kind of unusual for somebody who plays both ways. He's a very committed athlete, and he'll do whatever it takes to be a great player."

## Why David Chose Nebraska:

"I really liked the facilities, the people and the school seemed to be a nice place to be around for the next four or five years."

## CAPSULE

The best thing about Webber is that he's a winner, playing a key role in three different state championship teams. Warren was the best player in Hazelwood East's 14-0 championship run last season. He had 65 tackles (30 solo), 10 sacks, 17 tackles for losses and four fumble recoveries as a defensive lineman. In wrestling, he is one of the better heavyweights in the country.

**CHOSE NEBRASKA OVER:** Alabama, Notre Dame, Florida, Oklahoma

Son of Jennifer and Paul, Jr. Webber



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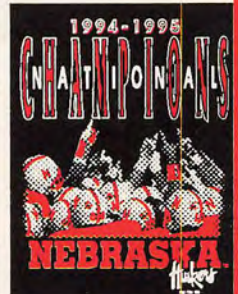
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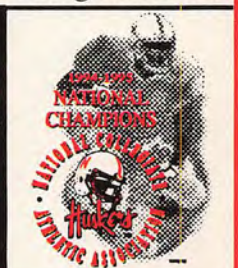
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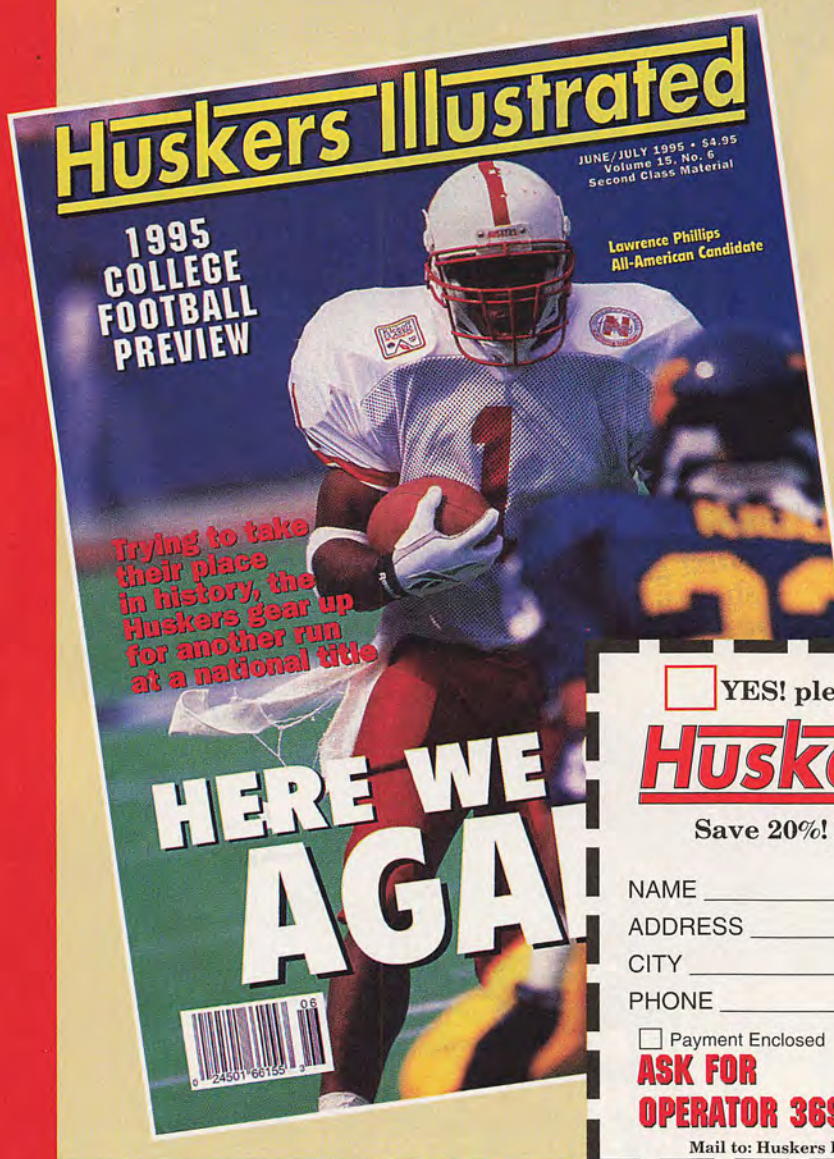
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# WHO'S NEXT?



**Scared of no one,  
Tim Neumann's squad  
has taken on all challenges  
and has risen near the top  
of the polls**





University of Nebraska Sports Information photos

A difficult schedule toughened up the Nebraska wrestling team this winter. With duals against teams like Iowa, Illinois and Indiana, and also against Big Eight foes Iowa State, Oklahoma and Oklahoma State, the Huskers have faced the best the country has to offer.

Nebraska coach Tim Neumann is eager to find out how well the tough schedule prepared the Huskers for the NCAA Wrestling Championships, which will be held March 21-23 at the Target Center in Minneapolis.

A year ago, the Huskers posted one of the finest seasons in school history, placing sixth at the national meet and were 17-3 in duals. With the return of national champion heavyweight Tolly Thompson and four other All-Americans, Neumann is expecting even better things for Nebraska this spring.

"We've wrestled an incredibly tough schedule this year, hoping it prepares us for the national championships," Neumann said. "We won't wrestle anybody we're not used to seeing during the season, that's for sure."

"The unfortunate thing about our sport is that you work for seven and a half months and the whole season comes down to one competition. But we're in position to improve on

what we did last year."

Leading the way for the Huskers is Thompson, a junior who finished 36-2 last year and became the first underclassman in school history to win an NCAA title. As of Feb. 8, Thompson was ranked second in the country with a 32-1 record.

He is also just the fourth wrestler in school history to post three 30-win seasons.

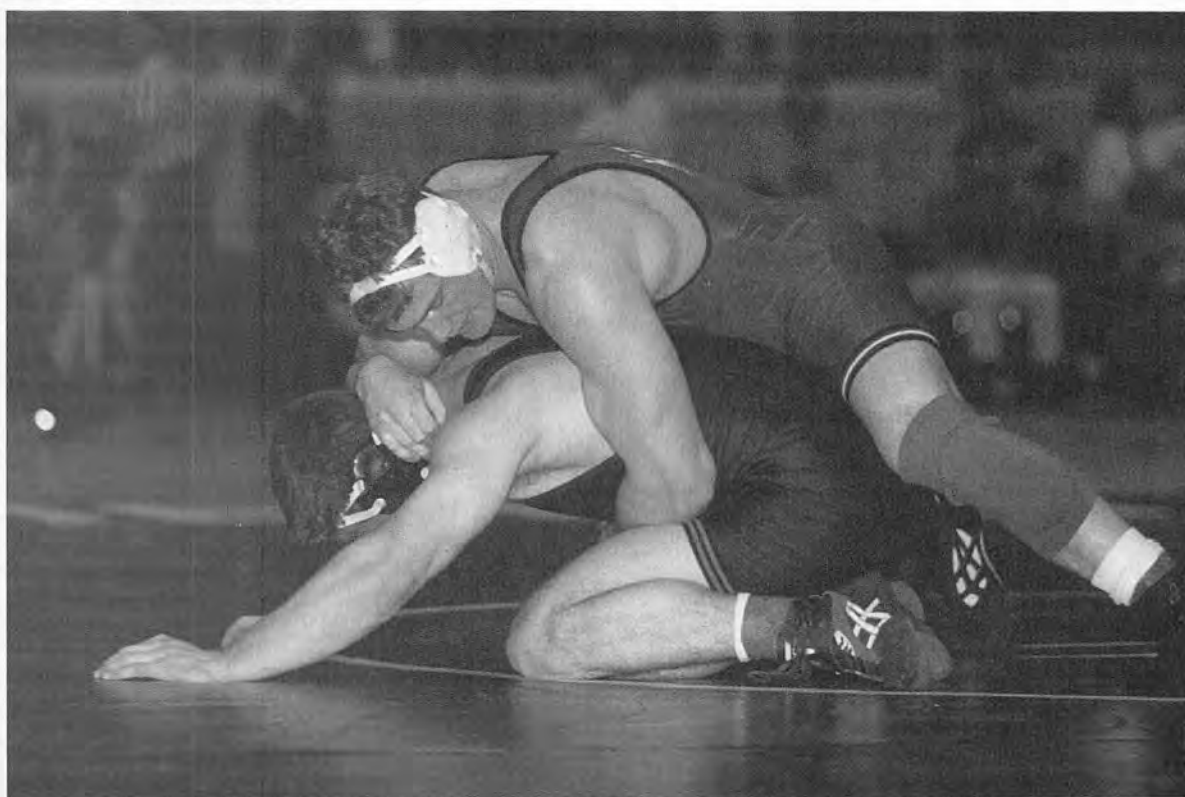
So how much does Thompson mean to the Huskers?

"He's been our leader the last couple of years now, not only during meets but also in the wrestling room because of his consistent work habits," Neumann said. "It's nice to have him at meets wrestling at the end, because we can usually count on him to score for us. But he's a real solid performer in practice, too."

But Thompson isn't the only Husker to have national champion aspirations. Junior Temoer Terry, who finished fourth at the NCAA meet last year at 150 pounds, has moved up to 158 pounds this year and won 16 of his first 17 matches.

As a sophomore last year, Terry

**Nebraska has been counting on heavyweight Tolly Thompson to finish its meets this year, and he hasn't disappointed.**





was 35-3 and won 23 consecutive matches to open the season.

Terry has had to battle knee problems this winter, but Neumann expects to have him back healthy for the national meet.

"All Temoer has to do is get healed up and I think he's one of the top two wrestlers at his weight class," Neumann said. "He's beaten the defending national champion this year and he's split matches with the top-ranked wrestler at his weight class. He should be ready to prove he's one of the best."

At 190 pounds, Ryan Tobin is ranked fourth in the nation with a 22-7 record. Tobin was eighth at nationals last year. Brad Canoyer, who was sixth at the NCAA meet a year ago as a redshirt freshman, is back as the Huskers' top wrestler at 118. He is ranked seventh nationally.

"Ryan wrestled the No. 1 ranked guy (John Kading of Oklahoma) and was losing 3-2 with 20 seconds to go before he got a single leg hold and was ready to win the match," Neumann said. "But he lost his balance and ended up on his back, but

he's right there. He's close to making the next step and competing for a national title."

The Huskers are solid at other weights, too. Erik Josephson is ranked ninth at 177 after posting a 27-3 record to open the season. At 134, Tony DeAnda, a senior from South Sioux City, Neb., is ranked fifth at 24-8. At 150 pounds, Jason Kraft has struggled this season, going 21-12.

"We're going to need guys like Josephson, DeAnda and Kraft to step up if we want to be in the thick of things at the national championships," Neumann said. "It's that simple."

Neumann said he thinks this squad will battle for the Big Eight Conference title, with Oklahoma State, Iowa State and Oklahoma. The Huskers defeated both Iowa State and Oklahoma in duals this season, but dropped a 22-16 decision to Oklahoma State.

The Huskers will compete for the final Big Eight title on March 9 in Stillwater, Okla.

"This will be like another NCAA meet," Neumann said. "Last year, we had the Nos. 2, 3, 4, 5 teams in the nation in the Big Eight, and that could be the case this year. We feel like the Big 10 feels in that we have

to go through a national tournament to get to the national tournament."

The thought of going against the best doesn't scare Neumann. The Huskers have been doing it all season.

At the Cliff Keen National Wrestling Coaches Association National Duals in January in Lincoln, Nebraska advanced to the finals before a 20-15 loss to top-ranked Iowa. In reaching the finals, the Huskers beat No. 8 Arizona State 28-7 and No. 9 Penn State 25-10.

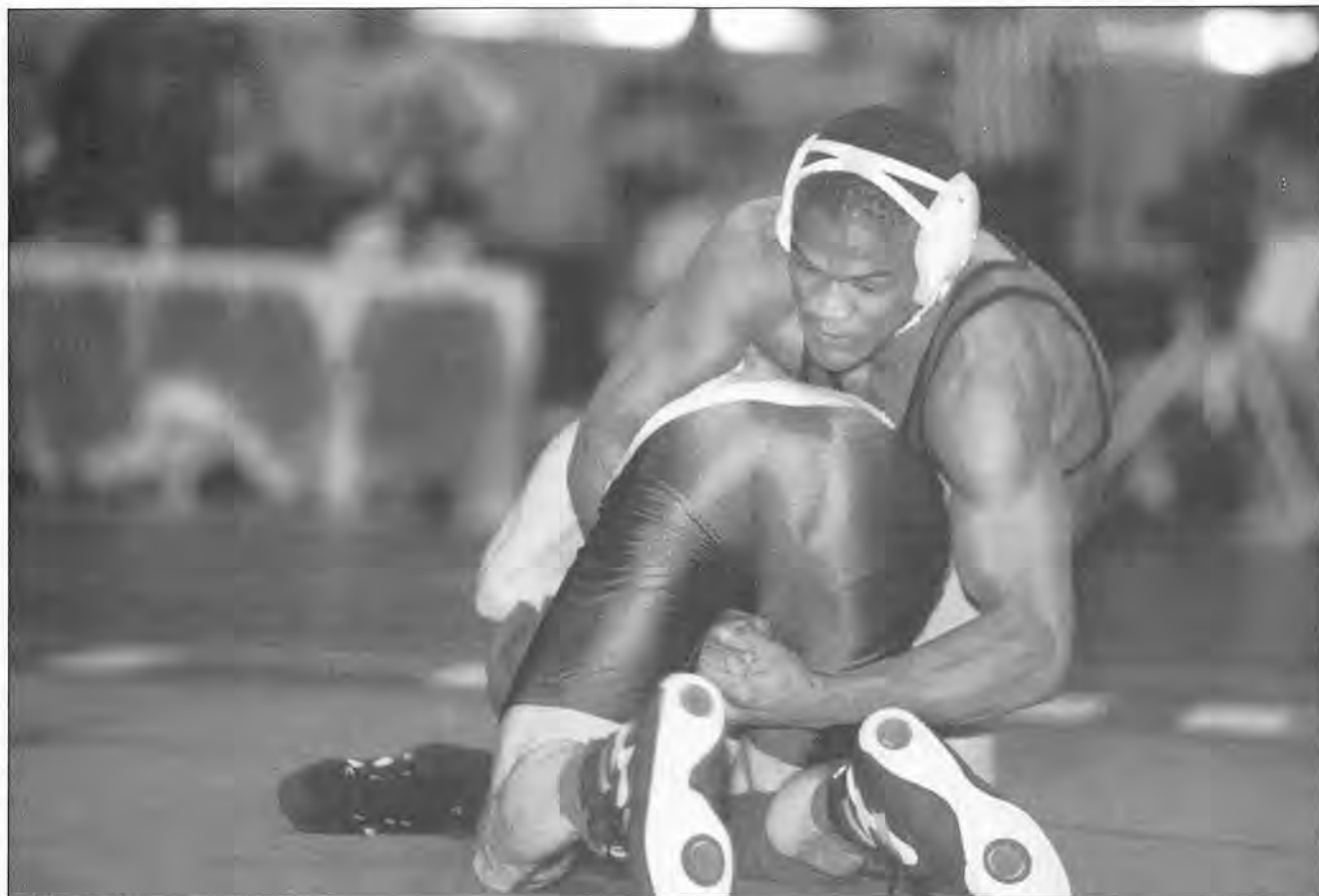
In addition, Nebraska has posted victories over No. 20 Ohio State, No. 25 West Virginia, No. 22 Pittsburgh and No. 5 Minnesota. The Huskers also tied Oklahoma State earlier in the year before losing at home in early February.

For their efforts, the Huskers are ranked third in the national dual rankings, behind Iowa and OSU.

"It's really good to wrestle teams like Iowa and Oklahoma State and other good teams," Neumann said. "If you only compete against weaker teams, you can't tell what your weaknesses are. But your weaknesses are fully exposed against teams like Iowa."

"By going against the best, we know what we have to do if we want to be the best." ■

**Temoer Terry's gamble to move up to the 158 pound division from 150 has paid off with a 16-1 record so far.**





# Pettit Signs Three

Tom Osborne wasn't the only Nebraska coach with a national title under his belt to clean up on national signing day.

Fresh off his first national title, Terry Pettit landed three outstanding prep players addressing needs and holes on his volleyball team.

The Huskers inked middle blockers Katie Jahnke and Tonia Tauke as well as outside hitter Mandy Monson.

"It's a typical Nebraska recruiting class," Pettit said. "All of them are strong athletes and great students. You won't know until four years later how this class compares to others."

"Historically, we've always had at least one freshman play a significant role."

That someone could very easily be Jahnke, a 6-foot middle blocker from West Bend, Wis.

Jahnke, a third-team Mizuno High School All-American, led her team to two state championship finishes and a runner-up finish during her four-year career. The two-time conference Player of the Year, she finished fifth at the 1995 Nike Challenge.

"Her biggest strength is her transition attack. Physically, she is very strong and powerful," Pettit said. "She is probably the most experienced player we have coming in. Physically, she has the potential to play a significant role."

A middle blocker with the size and quickness to dominate the net, Tauke (6-3) has been compared to current NU player Jen McFadden. Tauke, from Council Bluffs, Iowa, was an alternate on the 1995 Junior National Team.

"She has exceptional agility and strong ball handling skills," Pettit said. "Her hand-eye coordination is exceptional."

Monson, a middle blocker at Wallace, Neb., was the honorary captain of the 1995 Lincoln Journal Star D-2 All-State team.

"She will be an outside hitter at Nebraska," Pettit said. "With training and experience she will be a tremendous player at Nebraska." ■

## RELOADING FROM WITHIN

*Pettit will look to his already stocked cupboard for next year's leaders*

When Nebraska volleyball coach Terry Pettit looked up into the stands at the Mullins Center in Amherst, Mass., just before his Huskers played for the national championship, he saw many familiar faces.

A number of former Nebraska standouts were in the crowd, rooting the Huskers on to their first national championship with a four-game win against Texas. A day later, Pettit publicly thanked his former players, not only for being there to witness history, but for also playing a part in winning the title.

"I feel particularly good about the players on this team, but I feel good about walking into that arena and seeing Angie Millikin, Val Novak, Lori Endicott, Karen Dahlgren and knowing this is important to them," Pettit said.

"This is very meaningful to them, because without them, this does not happen."

In the near future, Pettit could be looking into the stands and seeing the three seniors who helped make the national championship possible — middle blocker and three-time All-American Allison Weston, two-time All-America setter Christy Johnson and outside hitter Billie Winsett, who had 25 kills in the title match and whom Pettit considers one of the best passers in NU history.

It will be tough for Pettit to replace the three standouts, but Nebraska won't be without experience and talent next year.

For starters, sophomore outside hitter Lisa Reitsma earned first-team All-America status this season. She averaged four kills per game this season, second best on the team behind Weston.

Reitsma, a 6-foot-4 native of Sanborn, Iowa, put down a career-high 37 kills in a five-game victory against Florida during the regular season.

In the middle, blocker Jen McFadden will be a senior in 1996. Injuries limited McFadden's play early in the year, but she still averaged nearly two kills per game, and she also averaged more than one block.

Junior outside hitter Kate Crnich, who had 25 kills against Texas in the national championship game, also returns. Crnich, the Huskers' fifth option on offense, took advantage of Texas' plan to focus on Weston and Reitsma during the final to post a career high in kills.

In addition, middle blocker Stacie Maser, a redshirt freshman from Lincoln, started most of the season and averaged more than one kill and nearly one block per game.

Hitter/defense specialist Maria Hedbeck proved to be one of the Huskers' top players in the back row. As a freshman, Hedbeck was one of the team's top hitters before a shoulder injury limited her at that spot.

Fiona Nepo, who will be a sophomore in the fall, is the heir apparent to Johnson at setter. Nepo, a native of Honolulu, was an All-American as a high school senior and was considered one of the top recruits in the nation.

Freshman Lisa Avery, who stands 6-1, could be asked to help fill the void left by Weston in the middle. Avery redshirted during this season. Sophomores-to-be Jaime Krondak or Renee Saunders will battle with others to take Winsett's place at outside hitter. Krondak had 31 kills while playing in 26 matches, and Saunders recorded just six kills in very limited playing time. ■ — Mark Derowitsch



**When healthy Maria Hedbeck has been one of NU's top players in the back row.**



**T**errance Badgett studied, intently, the final statistics from Nebraska's 88-73 loss to Kansas at the Devaney Sports Center in late January.

The Jayhawks came to Lincoln with a No. 3 national ranking and an eight-game winning streak, following their only loss in 15 games. Even so, the Cornhuskers, who had won six of their previous seven games, were optimistic about an upset.

The game, televised regionally by CBS, attracted a sellout crowd of 14,620 on an unseasonably warm Super Bowl Sunday afternoon.

The setting was appropriately dramatic for a tradition-rich rivalry that dates to 1900. But the upset didn't occur.

Nebraska played Kansas to a standoff in the first half. The Jayhawks held a tenuous, 36-35 lead at the intermission. But the early minutes of the second half were fatal for Nebraska, which had shown an unfortunate, and inexplicable, propensity toward slow second-half starts.

Finally, after he had digested every fact contained in the statistics, Badgett answered the questions of reporters assembled in the ready room next to the Cornhusker locker room. "The first five minutes of the second half, they were outrageous," he said. "We didn't control it."

Even so, Badgett saw something positive in the Cornhuskers' fifth loss in 20 games. "When we're down, we don't give up. I see a lot of heart on this team. We don't stop playing," he said.

You've got to have heart, of course. Otherwise, Nebraska might have given up when the deficit reached 18. But the Cornhuskers battled back. They cut the margin to seven points and had three possessions to pull even closer. Unfortunately, each of the possessions ended with a bad-pass turnover.

Badgett was asked if the team's confidence had been shaken by the loss. "Not at all," he said, repeating himself for emphasis. "Not at all."

After a shocking, 109-104 non-conference loss to Northern Iowa at the Sports Center in mid-December, the Cornhuskers regrouped for the start of Big Eight play. Through the early games of the conference sched-

ule, anyway, Nebraska looked like the team it was supposed to be, a legitimate contender for a first-division finish and a trip to the NCAA Tournament, after a season away.

That was most apparent in back-to-back victories against Oklahoma State and Missouri. The Cornhuskers went to Stillwater, Okla., having lost eight in a row to Oklahoma State at Gallagher-Iba Arena and returned to Lincoln with an impressive 66-57 victory.

On the night before the Oklahoma State game, Nebraska players and coaches met to discuss the course of their season, on the heels of a controversial 117-100 loss in triple-overtime at Oklahoma a week earlier.

The meeting was intense, lasting the better part of an hour and a half, according to junior Mikki Moore. "Everybody said how they felt. We brought up a lot of things," he said. Afterward, "I felt great. It made me feel like we were more of a family."

Early in the season, "you could feel the individual play on the court," Moore said. "Not any more. We're doing extra things to help the team as a whole now."

During the meeting, Moore said, the Cornhuskers emphasized three goals that would have to be achieved in order to achieve their ultimate goal: success in the conference and a return trip to the NCAA Tournament. They would have to play hard. They would have to play as a team. And they would have to improve defensively.

The Oklahoma loss underscored the importance of that third concern. "If we had played better defense, we wouldn't have gone into three overtimes," said Moore. "We can get our offense going. The big thing is to step up the defense."

Senior Tom Wald, who was sidelined early in the season by injury, reminded the team of that before the Missouri game. He told his teammates: "Remember the meeting in Stillwater. We've got to stick with what we said."

The Cornhuskers did, playing aggressive defense and leading Missouri from the opening tip to the final gun. They were focused, turning over the ball only 14 times. And they won 76-58.

The victory was Nebraska's most decisive against Missouri in 30 years. It was the Cornhuskers' third victory in a row and their sixth in seven



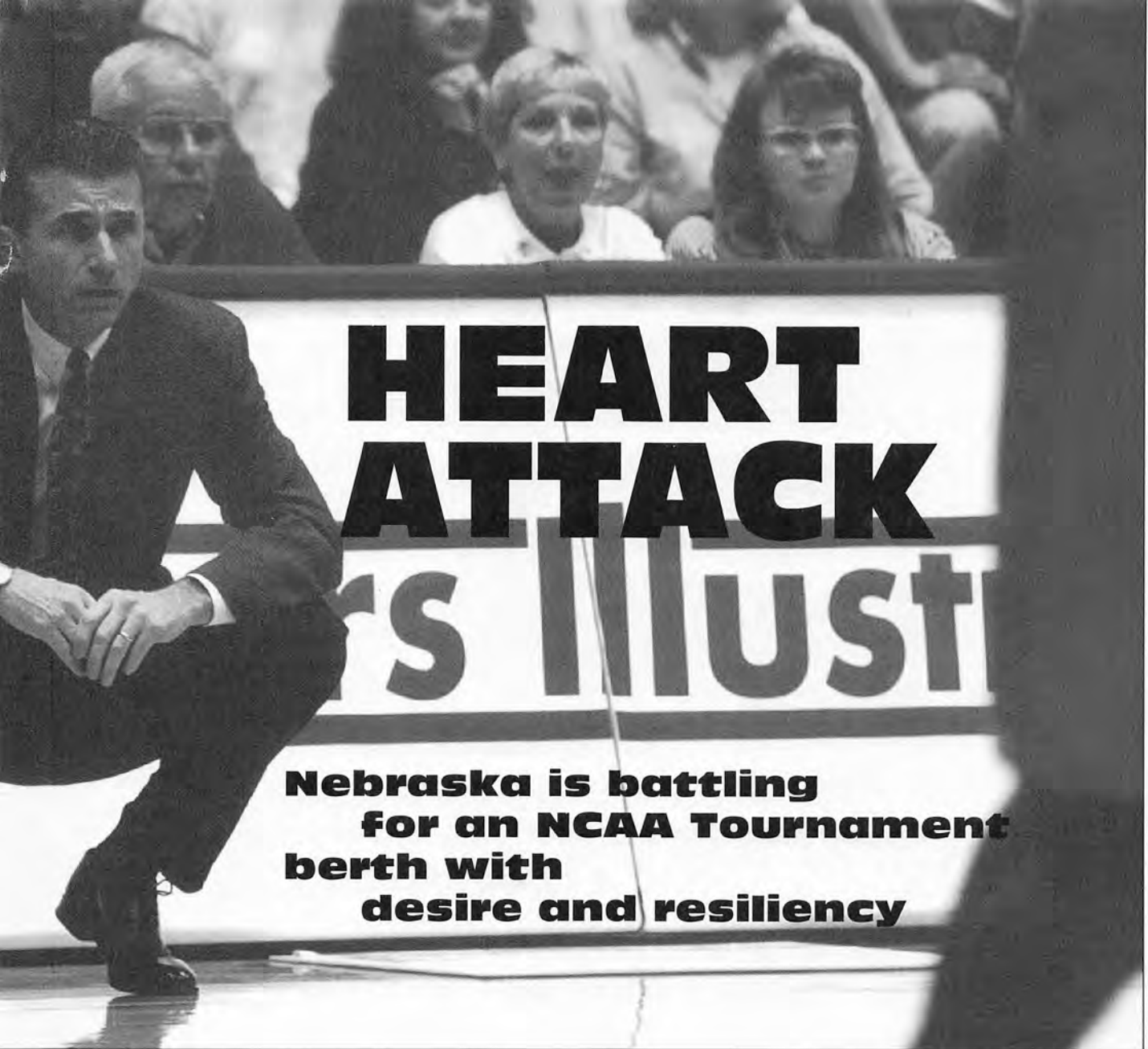
**Danny Nee has watched his team regroup from a shocking 109-104 non-conference loss to Northern Iowa and become a dominant force in the Big Eight.**

games following a 69-66 loss to nationally ranked Mississippi State in the championship game of the Far West Classic at Portland, Ore., in late December. They had trailed Mississippi State by 16 points in the second half before rallying and putting themselves in a position to win.

They rebounded from the Mississippi State loss by defeating Texas 85-69 at the Sports Center to start the new year off right. The Texas game was physical, ragged at times, and Nebraska didn't make a three-point shot (in only four attempts). But, as coach Danny Nee

Bob Berry





# HEART ATTACK

**Nebraska is battling  
for an NCAA Tournament  
berth with  
desire and resiliency**

likes to say, the Cornhuskers found a way to win.

The first time through the Big Eight, Nebraska looked like its old self, which means Cornhusker fans who were hypnotized by the football team's rather matter-of-fact repeat national championship (no one really challenged Tom Osborne's team) might have been a bit uneasy.

Nee's 10th team plays on the edge, the way his best teams have, an entertaining style but also one that is disconcerting for those who don't appreciate a certain amount of suspense from one game to the next — and aren't willing to accept an occasional loss.

Tyronn Lue, the second true freshman to start a Big Eight opener under Nee (the first was Jaron Boone), has stepped in and played point guard as if he were a veteran.

And junior college transfer Bernard Garner has become a significant factor inside, where Nebraska still takes its lumps all too often.

Lue and Garner have been welcome additions to the lineup, as has true freshman Venson Hamilton and redshirted freshmen Andy Markowski and Leif Nelson, whose role changed when senior Chris Sallee used up his eligibility during the first semester.

Nebraska's 12-3 non-conference record, though one and possibly two victories off what it might have been, was sufficient to give the Cornhuskers hopes of getting to the NCAA Tournament.

Still, the loss to Kansas at home pointed out how far they are from the nation's best teams, Nee said afterward. "At halftime, we figured the key would be transition defense

the first five minutes of the second half. It turned out to be a nightmare."

The key was properly identified. "We talked about just what happened," said Strickland.

Nebraska experienced problems with slow second-half starts during the non-conference season and into Big Eight play. "We've got to find a way to get out of that slump," Strickland said.

The loss to Kansas could be traced directly to that problem, and the Jayhawks' rebounding strength, and Nebraska's unforced turnovers, and . . .

But the Cornhuskers also showed resiliency during that stretch. "This is not going to get us down," Garner said.

In that sense, at least, it seemed like old times. ■





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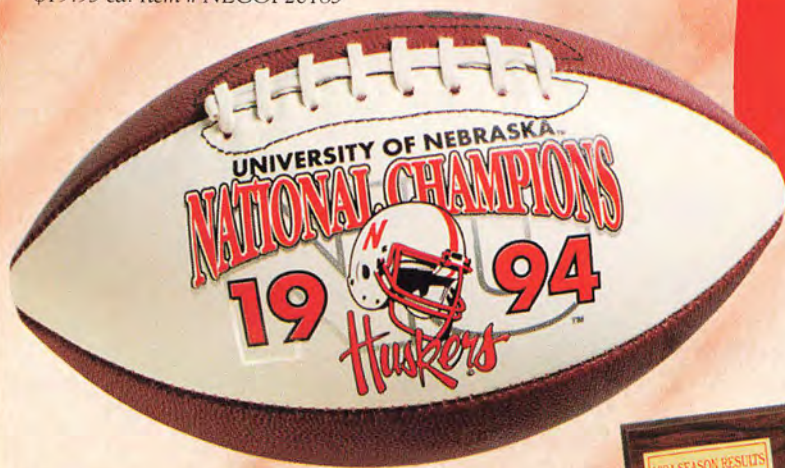
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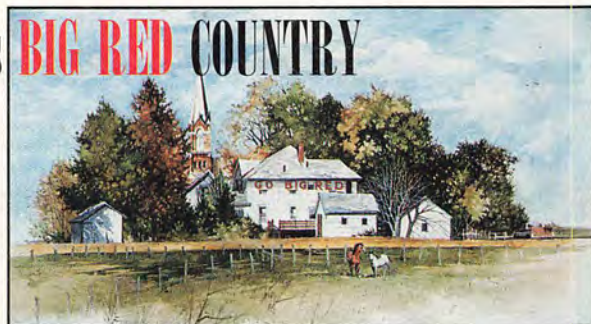
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C. "Reflections of Dear  
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